

CHRISTIAN COURIER

June 8, 2009

REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LIBRARY

CHRISTIAN COURIER
PER/BX/9401/.C36

JUN 18 2009

No. 2866 \$2.00



12,000 attend Canadian
National March for Life...p.7

Fledgling Christian ballet
company takes flight...p.10



63rd year of publication

Christians respond to the recession



Canadian Council of Churches discusses how faith relates to the economy



Kathy Vandergrift

OTTAWA— In May, the Canadian Council of Churches hosted a dialogue on Faith and a Sustainable Economy. On the agenda were the major challenges facing Canada: the global economic crisis, the environmental crisis and reconciliation between peoples. The testimony focused on what faith communities could contribute to addressing these issues.

I have been to many faith-based discussions on public policy issues over the years, and this one was different in character. Those differences reflect changes in the ongoing dance between faith and public life in Canada. Justice, love for neighbours, and care of creation are recurring themes of such discourse. But the nature of the dialogue is changing, and those changes are important for our Christian witness today.

Diversity of voice

The first change is a wider range of voices. The Council now includes a broad range of churches from Orthodox to Baptist denominations. For the noon hour exchange with Members of Parliament,

the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada co-hosted the forum. First Nations voices were included on the panels throughout the day. For an evening prayer session for peace in Afghanistan, the congregants included voices from other religions, such as Jewish and Islamic voices, and representatives from the Embassy of Afghanistan.

More importantly, there was no pressure to be the same or to focus on differences. The diversity was accepted as reality. The focus was on how people of all faiths can contribute to the life of the nation without leaving their faith in the cloakroom outside the door.

On the parliamentary side, members from all parties attended the noon hour dialogue. For many years the Bloc rarely attended events hosted by Canadian churches and all parties were reluctant to openly discuss how faith intersects with their political decisions. Now there is broad acceptance that faith plays a legitimate role in the public square. The questions are how, not if.

Irresponsible greed lies at the heart of the economic crisis.

Humility and hope

There were no official proclamations, no Bishops statement on the economy, as we had in earlier decades. Gone are triumphalist pronouncements on the right way to run the nation. Instead of specific prescriptions that claim divine authority, the themes of justice, love, and creation care were discussed in relation to our time.

Even more encouraging, the fear that characterizes much of political discourse today (fear of economic failure, fear for the future of our planet, fear of the "other") was directly countered with hope. It was not a shallow optimism, but a hopefulness rooted in a deep consciousness that God is

See CCC on page 2



Using the gospel to save the US David Frengel on Christendom and Globalization



provide effective guidance for believers seeking to live and work faithfully in the political and economic spheres.

How do you define globalization?

I distinguish between the natural acceleration of closer relations among world cultures caused by modern technology

Interview by Angela Reitsma Bick

CC: What impact has Christianity had in the West, historically?

David Frengel: The fruit of the institutionalization of biblical values into the Western social order has been the progressive liberation of the poor and weak from the oppressive power of the rich and strong.

This accounts for the unprecedented reality that Western societies have historically enjoyed great prosperity and a just and stable social order simultaneously with limited government and great personal liberty.

When Reformed Protestants came to this continent to build a society deliberately founded on the biblical worldview, they further advanced Western thought about a just social order. The result was the unique constitutional representative democratic republic and free enterprise system of early America.

How have things changed today?

Now the American system is in crisis, not only politically and economically but also spiritually. The talking heads are openly questioning whether capitalism and free enterprise can and should survive. Some political scientists openly suggest that constitutional representative government no longer suffices to govern the "new global village." Many around the world are expressing concern about American-style globalization. Meanwhile, the church appears to be asleep at the switch, unable to

vis-a-vis the unnatural corporate capitalistic monoculture being forced upon us under the guise of "free trade." The former is a normal human development; the latter is a radical ideology – Globalization with a capital "G." Big "G" Globalization transcends the authority of nation-states and integrates nations into a global political-economic system under the control of corporate capitalism (not the same as free enterprise). This aggressive and unnatural form of globalization is rapidly undermining what is left of our constitutional republic and free enterprise system by forcing the integration of incompatible political economies.

Can you give an example of Big "G" Globalization?

The big "G" Globalists engineered our trade relations with China. They knew the Chinese had neither the ability nor the will to abide by the rules of free trade, but they were determined to bet the future of America on the gamble that in a global trade free-for-all, they could impose corporate Globalization there too. They call this gamble "engagement." No matter how it turns out they will make trillions in the process.

The bad effects are everywhere. The U.S. middle class is rapidly shrinking and mid-sized cities, small towns, and rural communities are declining as manufacturing industries disappear offshore and agribusiness and big

See Interview on page 2

News

CCC continued from page 1

in charge, God has redeemed creation, and he is working in our midst.



Mike Hogeterp (L), vice-chair of the commission of Justice and Peace for the CCC, catches up with Don Hutchinson, Director of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada's Centre for Faith and Public Life.

Deeper directions

There was agreement that a focus on the common good must replace the blind faith that an uninhibited drive for individual wealth will automatically benefit everyone. Irresponsible greed lies at the heart of the economic crisis, and it could have been prevented, according to testimony at the forum, if regulations had been adopted to protect the common good. It was a moment of moral clarity amid the blizzard of economic bad news, and this insight is exactly what political leaders value about faith-based contributions to political discourse.



Care for creation must have higher priority. As an environmentalist said, it will

Kathy Vandergrift is a member of the Commission on Justice and Peace, Canadian Council of Churches. She holds a Master's Degree in Public Ethics.

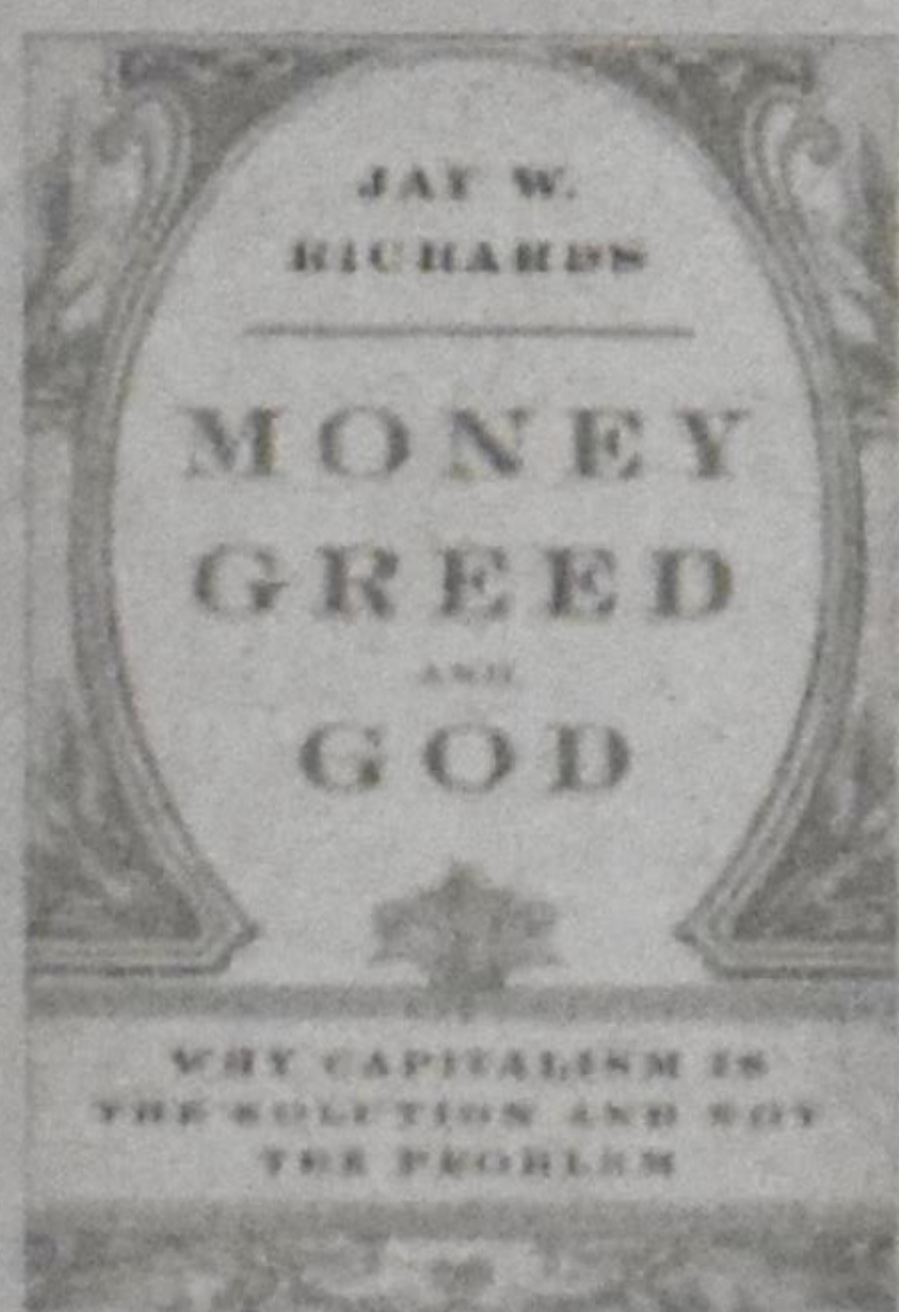
take spiritual motivation as well as respect for scientific evidence to change course. Ecology is a moral and ethical issue as well as a scientific matter. Faith-based perspectives, such as the First Nations principle of looking ahead seven generations when making decisions and a recent Quaker-inspired volume on *The Moral Economy*, can contribute to public policies that change direction.

Some of the directional changes discussed include spiritual and ethical indicators for progress to replace the Gross Domestic Product; economic co-operation to replace unbridled competition; renewed respect for the role of just governance in the marketplace; renewal of public spaces and public services to replace privatization; and enabling communities to work together for their common good. All of these directional changes, according to the theologians in the crowd, find sustenance in a Biblical imagination and a return to themes in the sacred scriptures of many faith traditions.

Faith plays a legitimate role in the public square.

It struck me that this event is a Canadian version of what Jim Wallis describes in *The Great Awakening*, about a revival of the voice of faith in United States politics. It was tentative and timid, a first step toward a more robust engagement. It was both a revival of some of the best in the Christian tradition in Canada and different enough to avoid some of the unproductive polarization that has harmed both religious and political discourse in recent years. More than anything, the current time of trouble and uncertainty creates an opportunity for new ways of public witness. Let's seize the opportunity.

New book offers Christian perspective on capitalism



"I find the interplay between Christian commitment and economics fascinating, and filled with misunderstandings. If you've ever had questions about capitalism, and in particular whether or not a generous Christian can really support capitalism, I would encourage you to read Jay Richards' new book *Money, Greed, and God: Why Capitalism is the Solution and Not the Problem*."

— Rev. Kevin DeYoung, senior pastor of the University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Michigan, and the author of *Why we're not Emergent*, by two guys who should be (co-authored with Ted Kluck).

"In easy-to-understand chapters Richards annihilates the economic myths taught as fact in schools and magazines. This is an excellent gift for graduates and others who have been subjected to years of propaganda."

— Marvin Olasky, editor in chief of *World* magazine.

Interview continued from page 1

box corporate importers gobble up small farmers and merchants. The impact on the disadvantaged in our inner cities is devastating. The impact on nations like Mexico is even worse.

As a result of NAFTA, American agribusiness and multinationals greatly expanded operations in Mexico. Masses of small farm families were dispossessed and thousands of small manufacturers were put out of business. The result has been widespread unemployment and migration. The Mexicans are hard-working people with strong family values. For millions desperate to support their families, the only option was to seek work in the U.S. (A wall will not keep them out.)

And because America is the *de facto* symbol of Christianity in the world, the spread of corporate capitalism undermines our international gospel witness.

What happened to the influence of Christianity in the United States?

Unfortunately, in the last century or so modernism and post-modernism have combined to divide the church in America into a Christian Right that has a dualistic approach to public life and a Christian Left with a more secular and pluralistic approach. As a result, the American Christian civil ethos has been supplanted by a commitment to private well-being and pragmatic short-term special interest politics.

As a result, the power of the monied interests has eclipsed the power of our government and undermined genuine rules-based free enterprise. This is not to imply that private wealth, large banks, and corporations are inherently evil and unnecessary; but, like everything else, their impact for good or ill

depends on their proper ordering within the constraints of biblical norms.



David W. Frengel is the Director of Government Affairs for Penn United Technologies, a precision mid-market manufacturer in Pennsylvania. He is a founding director of the Coalition for a Prosperous America. Mr. Frengel is a Ruling Elder in Westminster Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Butler, PA, and has a degree in Biblical Studies from Geneva College.

What is a viable alternative?

Good fences make good neighbors. We must set the same legal-financial constraints on foreign commerce as those we have on domestic commerce. These constraints evolved over centuries in Western Culture under great influence from Christianity. If we do this, the nations that genuinely desire to engage in mutually beneficial trade will align with our system while those that desire our wealth but do not respect the Western norms that undergird our way of life will limit commerce with us by their own choices. The result will be genuine free trade and a normal and healthy form of globalization.

If we act faithfully, we will enjoy renewed relationships of friendship, cooperation, and commerce with all nations, and they will learn to appreciate our heritage in the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ.

Can the current model of capitalism be reformed? How?

Every religion warns of the conflict between commercial and civil values. Capitalism and free enterprise are not the same. Genuine free enterprise occurs when commercial and civil values are balanced through the rule of just laws. Genuine free trade will occur when the rules of free enterprise are consistently applied to the global economy. Reforming the U.S. trade regime according to the sound principles of our Christian heritage is the best way to rebalance things and reverse this situation.

There are established rules to remedy nearly all of the unfair trade practices that threaten our economy and our future. Christians on all sides of the issue would greatly benefit from exploring these together. The prayerful discernment of those God has called and gifted to serve in this arena would yield much good fruit to the glory of God, the advancement of the gospel and the good of all.



News/Politics



Volunteer paid 'blood' debt to Canadian soldiers

Bert Witvoet

EDMONTON, Alta. – One of our long-time readers was recently awarded the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award. James Cupido was recognized for having donated blood more than 500 times (actually it's 568 now) in his life. He started in 1964 upon the encouragement of his wife, Bernice. He got "hooked" in more ways than one.

What especially inspired James was the fact that Canadian soldiers had given their very lives when they liberated his land of birth, the Netherlands. "They left their blood on foreign soil, and, by doing that, they made a lasting impression in my life," he writes. In addition, he remembers the slogan his dad taught him and his siblings: "Giving builds character."



"This work of donating has been a labour of love in my life," he says. He remembers a nurse telling him 32 years ago that "your blood will go to a week-old baby." The thought of that outcome thrilled Cupido. "It's not always the big things that you do, but being faithful in the little things" that is important, he says.

Cupido, who is 78 today, was told seven years ago that federal rules prohibited him from donating anymore. He decided to fight that battle, which lasted two years. He helped convince Ottawa that there is no medical reason for banning healthy seniors from giving blood. "Now there is no age limit, and 9,000 people in Alberta alone were able to start donating again."

It's this attitude of wanting to make a difference that garnered him and 75 other people across the land an award that honours volunteers who have provided years of extraordinary help or care to people in their communities. The award comes with a framed certificate and a lapel pin usually presented by a local dignitary.

Torture and the rule of law

At one time it was a commonplace occurrence to see convicted criminals treated in painful and humiliating ways. Grisly penalties were applied to murderers, pickpockets and heretics, and ordinary people turned out in large numbers to witness these spectacles, apparently learning the hard lesson that, to coin a cliché, crime does not pay. However the English Bill of Rights of 1689, adopted after the previous year's ouster of King James II, prohibited the application of "cruel and unusual punishments," in language that would eventually find its way into the US Bill of Rights and our own Charter of Rights and Freedoms, where the word "treatment" was notably added.

What then of pre-trial treatment? What means are permitted in questioning a *suspected* criminal, that is, someone who has not yet been found guilty of a punishable crime? Since ancient times brutal means have often been employed to elicit a confession or incriminating information from a defendant. Such means are still used throughout the globe, despite the existence, among other similar treaties, of the 1985 United Nations Convention Against Torture, of which Canada and the United States are signatories.

Arguments against torture are based on two types of reasoning, principled and pragmatic. On the principled side, it is argued that human beings have an intrinsic dignity that ought not to be violated through mistreatment, even if it is in the interest of a larger good, for example national security. An argument can also be made that those who engage in torture must suppress their own humanity to bring themselves to commit such an act. In short, torture is unjust.

Those of a more pragmatic bent insist that, even if torture were not morally wrong, its use is not effective, as the victim could easily confess to something he did not do in order to end the ordeal. Even if the suspect *is* guilty of harbouring information about fellow conspirators that might be crucial to stopping a terrorist act, he could just as easily give false or misleading information to his



Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

interrogators, who would not necessarily know the difference.

Nevertheless, the temptation to torture is one that many officials find irresistible when confronted with a threat to the lives of innocent people, much as in wartime a country's government will be tempted to retaliate in kind against an attack on civilians. There can be no doubt that al Qaeda and similar organizations have employed unjust means, precisely to entice their opponents to respond in illegal ways and thereby discredit themselves.

Admittedly the United States was in a difficult international position as it sought an effective response to the 9/11 attacks. The Bush administration severely botched the public relations side of this as it needlessly alienated otherwise friendly governments needed to mount an effective multilateral defence.

Moreover, the fact that Washington claimed to be waging a war on *terror* was, from the outset, deeply misguided. It is precisely because this "war" has such a nebulous and unattainable aim that the government prosecuting it will tend to lose sight of which means are appropriate in its pursuit. If our aim is to eradicate terror, residual bourgeois sympathies, schoolyard bullying or something similarly unrealistic, any effort to do so will almost inevitably tempt us, in our choice of means, to flirt with the edges of legality and rectitude. Why? Simply because no means whatever will enable us to reach a goal so vague as to lack a reasonable chance of success.

Better to keep a *feasible* goal before us and to choose methods proper to its accomplishment, avoiding those that corrupt us and transgress the norms of justice.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and wonders whether a long-delayed effort at tidying up his office space represents an achievable aim.

OBERAMMERGAU TOURS 2010

We are pleased to offer a variety of tours to Oberammergau.

Departure	Tour Host
May 18	Dr. Bill Mundt
May 25	John DeSchiffart
June 22	Rev. David Sherbino
June 29	Rev. John Klomps
July 06	Rev. Mike Sherbino
August 31	Rev. George Anderson
Sept. 21	Earl Clint



These tours offer a variety of itineraries and are handled by the Aurora office. For tour details visit our website at:

www.verstraetetravel.com

AMSTERDAM FLIGHTS 2009

Martinair has stopped flying from Canada.

We can offer you charter flights on **Air Transat** as well as **KLM Royal Dutch Airlines**.

Contact the St. Catharines office for a competitive quote.

Shop and book online www.verstraetetravel.com

VERSTRAETE TRAVEL & CRUISES

36 Secord Drive, St. Catharines ON L2N 1K8

Tel. 905 934-4414 or long distance 1800 405-6088

email: niagara@verstraete.com

Yes, it's really tax free

Tax shelter more of your investment income and save for goals that benefit you and your family - a vacation, a big purchase, long term care, even your legacy.

Talk to us today to determine how the Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) could fit into your overall plan. You put the money in, you get the money and growth back out - the government doesn't take a share.

Save for your goals faster and free of Federal tax.*



CLARENCE WEIMA CFP
Senior Financial Consultant

1-800-488-9817

(24 hrs)

clarence.weima@investorsgroup.com

The Plan
by
Investors Group

Investors Group Financial Services Inc.

* In 2009, maximum contribution of \$5000 per person 18 years of age and over.
† Provincial taxation on TFSA has not yet been confirmed by all provinces. Talk to your Investors Group Consultant about the proposed rules in your province.

** Trademarks owned by IGM Financial Inc. and licensed to its subsidiary corporations.

Editorials

Missing persons report: Abortion in Canada



Angela Reitsma Bick

Last month, when five thousand Tamils in Toronto disrupted traffic on the Gardiner Expressway, I heard about it for days on CBC radio. When twelve thousand pro-lifers marched down the streets of Ottawa, however, the event was barely covered by mainstream media at all (see page 7 for CC article). Journalists and politicians alike find it safer to avoid talking about abortion in this country, but silence doesn't make the issues go away. As Christians, we need to stand up for the rights of the unborn and try to engage others in honest, thoughtful discussion about life from conception, types of contraception and even genetic screening.

Weighty decisions

I got an unexpected call from the midwife when I was about four months pregnant. She wanted to discuss an ultrasound. I remember walking into the clinic with a sinking, slightly sick feeling – like I'd been called into the principal's office without knowing why. The midwife scanned the computer documents while I fidgeted.

"Okay," she finally said, "your due date is correct. There is some indication, though, that baby could have neural tube defects or Down's syndrome. There's a seven percent ratio for that."

I stopped moving. "Pardon me?"

She read off the sheet once more, gently adding that neural tube defects were fatal shortly after birth. The medical language washed over me, blocking my ears. I could not understand what she was saying.

"We can schedule amniocentesis to find out for sure," she said.

I shook my head as if to clear it, and said no. Then I scooped up my one-year-old daughter and drove home.

I like learning, in general, but it seemed to me even then that this test would not increase anyone's knowledge. The information it offered could only lead to fear. Instead, I prayed. God already knew more than I ever would about that little unborn life.

The same week, my husband Allan was comparing pregnant-wife stories with a co-worker. Both wives were roughly four-and-a-half months pregnant, filling up the bed with pillows, making more trips to the bathroom than seemed possible. Then, abruptly, the comparisons stopped.

Allan made a friendly inquiry about how things were going, and was told that his co-worker's wife just had an abortion. They had taken the test, and the baby failed.

"We found out it had Down's," he said matter-of-factly. It sounded like he was talking about an old car with an irreplaceable part – he regretted the loss, but wasn't torn up about it. There would be other cars, his tone seemed to say. *Who decides that?* we couldn't help wondering. *Who defines what's irreplaceable?* Your old beater might be our new car.

Mysteriously knit together

Even some scientists are critical of the ways that genetic testing is being used. "There is no way to be sure how any one pregnancy will develop," Ruth Hubbard, Biology professor emeritus at Harvard, says. "These probabilities are just probabilities." The ratios mean that in a large population of a certain kind, *x* will occur with a certain frequency. Therefore it is "infinitely cruel," she says, to "give women information that is meaningless, and to make them believe that they have to make judgements on that basis." Hubbard, an Austrian Jew who escaped the Nazis during WW II, emphasizes that the tests prove nothing. "Even in the most reliable instances, you still don't know the individual. You only know the statistics." And the anonymity of statistics makes it easy to be selfish, to choose abortion rather than the uncertainty of adoption or disability.

I keep coming back to King David's famous psalm, where he recognizes that God's knowledge of him is "too wonderful for me." It is enough to know "full well" that what God has created is wonderful, and to praise him for it.

In the case of genetic screening, computer technology has progressed beyond our capacity to understand it. And to feign understanding, in this case, is to interfere with "all the days ordained," with unhappy consequences.

Lost generations

The abortionist and controversial recipient of the Order of Canada, Henry Morgentaler, claims that legalizing abortion in Canada has solved some of our problems, such as child abuse. Paul Tuns, editor of the Catholic newspaper *The Interim*, vehemently disagrees, arguing that abortion has negatively impacted not only individuals, but all of Canadian society. Approximately 3.2 million babies have been killed in our country since the relevant bill was passed forty years ago. In a recent issue of *The Interim*, Tuns tallies the cost and consequence of abortion in Canada.

I was not surprised to read about the growing body of evidence that demonstrates the long-lasting negative effects on the physical, mental and emotional health of women (and families) after abortion. The second half of his argument, however, was more unusual. Tuns believes that the aborted "missing children translate into missing economic activity." He outlines how school enrolment

has declined in almost every part of Canada lately, with the drop most dramatic in Atlantic Canada. In Newfoundland, for example, there were 160,000 school-aged children in 1971, whereas today there are just 80,000. While people moving away from the East Coast may explain some of the decline, "falling fertility rates" are mostly to blame. All across Canada, smaller towns no longer have enough children to fill local schools, a trend that has been occurring for over 30 years and is only accelerated by the current recession. Similarly, seniors are exiting the workplace in greater numbers than there are young workers to replace them. Tuns demonstrates that abortion has hurt Canadian society as much as the individual women involved – not only economically, of course, but for many reasons. In the words of Mother Teresa, "If we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people to not kill each other? Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want."

Avoiding rubber stamp expressions



Brett Alan Dewing

As children, there are phrases that become imbedded in our minds through sheer repetition. While we are not old enough to yet know what these mantras mean, they are so much a part of us that we barely think to ask.

My favourite of these unexamined phrases came from television. For those my age and younger, the old "boob tube" was undoubtedly the most prolific source of phrase osmosis. The example I remember came from commercials for upcoming television programs. Living near the east coast, I often heard shows advertised as "at 8, 7 Central." Before I knew anything about time zones, the phrase "at 8, 7 Central" was an unquestioned resident in my head. In fact, I believe that I was in my early teens before I even thought to inspect this phrase and find a meaning. It had simply entered my inner world uninvited and made itself a permanent fixture.

The language of the redeemed

One of the most common sources of such accidental mantras is church. Leaving aside the often impenetrable world of hymns ("round yon virgin," anyone?), a child's mind is slowly inculcated with any number of esoteric phrases. Growing up in a United Methodist congregation, mine included "thus far the reading of God's word," "in the same way also he took the cup," and even the simple "tithes and offerings." I had no idea what the words meant, but they were among the furniture in my head. If I had grown up in the Christian Reformed Church of North America, I might have learned a whole different set: "Lord's Day," "Heidelberg Catechism," "soup and buns."

Danger, Will Robinson!

There is a twofold danger in these lived-in statements: a danger to those who do not know them at all and a danger to those who know them too well. This is particularly clear in the language of evangelism.

We who know the words by rote seldom know what it is we are actually saying. I have heard many a well-meaning witness peel off the popular "Do you know Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour?" as if it were a telephone number. It hardly inspires awe in the poor soul being asked, nor in the asker, who presumably does know this Jesus personally.

Another favourite here is the classic altar call – "every head bowed, every eye closed." (Can you imagine a better title for a book critiquing Evangelicalism?) I have often heard this admonition and dutifully kept my head and eyes in their proper places. But I wonder. It seems that there are always three new converts each time the question is asked – let's call them "thank you," "yes, I see you," and "in the back." How I have longed to spring open my eyes, to shoot up my head and to see if these stalwart repenters are indeed present.

An alarming encounter

The equal and opposite danger regards those who, by no fault of their own, have not grown up hearing the correct language.

As a young teenager, I once attended an event at my friend's church. A man cornered me in the hall and asked if I was "born again." I was frightened, and so I said "yes," but I wasn't sure what he had meant. I knew the story of Nicodemus, and so I assumed that he wondered if I were a Christian. But what a strange way to ask!

Continued on next page

Christian Courier

Founded in 1945

An independent bimonthly that seeks to: report on significant events in the Christian community and the world; express opinions infused by Scripture and rooted in a Reformed perspective; provide contact for the Christian community.

EDITORIAL TEAM & PRODUCTION STAFF

Op-Ed Editor: Bert Witvoet bert.witvoet@sympatico.ca
 News Editor: Angela Reitsma Bick angela@christiancourier.ca
 Feature Editor: Brett Alan Dewing brett@christiancourier.ca
 Circulation/Fam. ads: Rose der Nederlanden rose@christiancourier.ca
 Admin/Bus. ads/Web: Ineke Medcalf-Strayer ads@christiancourier.ca
 Church Page Editor: Marion Van Til marianvantil@roadrunner.com
 Contributing Editor: Peter Schuurman eternalstudent@sympatico.ca

The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by *Christian Courier* or the publisher. Please contact circulation if you cannot afford the subscription price but want to receive *Christian Courier*.

Christian Courier

5 Joanna Dr., St. Catharines ON L2N 1V1

Tel: (905) 682-8311; 1-800-969-4838

Web site: www.christiancourier.ca

Publications Mail Registration No. 09375

We acknowledge the assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

Canada

Letters

Can Grace and legalism live together?

In his article "Interfaith encounter on the road to Bulawayo," Bert Witvoet suggests that it is possible to be a Christian Muslim or a Christ-worshipping Muslim. Such a person's religion would be rejected as un-Islamic by Muslim leaders and most of the Muslim community. There are also serious problems in this notion from a Christian point of view. How can the Grace of the Gospel be combined with the legalism and works righteousness of Islam? How can membership of the Islamic umma be combined with membership of the Church?

There is a vast difference between being a Christ-worshipping Catholic or Presbyterian. The official doctrine of the Presbyterian churches is Christian. The official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church is Christian with a bit of paganism added. The official doctrine of Islam denies the deity of Christ and presents a way of salvation that is contrary to the Gospel.

I have served as a missionary among Muslims for almost thirteen years. I have seen firsthand how Muslims treat those who become Christians. They do not allow them to remain in Islam; they try to force them by threats, even against their life, to abandon faith in Christ and to return to Islam.

I think we need the guidance of our Reformed Confession here. The Belgic Confession in Article 28: The Obligations of Church Members, says: "It is the duty of all believers, according to God's Word, to distinguish themselves from those who do not belong to the church, in order to join this assembly wherever God has established it, even if civil authorities and royal decrees forbid and death and physical punishment result."

And so, all who withdraw from the church or do not join it act contrary to God's ordinance.

Bill Steele
Chatham, Ontario

A story from the wild west

In response to CC's question of April 27 "How have economic changes affected your family, your community and church, and how have you responded?" we received one more letter this week.

In the era of the Great Depression, droves of men went far from their homes to work on projects under Roosevelt's New Deal. My husband, Dan, works in construction, and the available local jobs have dried up this past year. This month, in order to get us through the recession, Dan headed to the wild west of Wyoming, U.S.A., to build a clean-coal plant commissioned by the federal government.

He was full of stories after his first day – eerie stories that bring to mind the Great Depression. What happens when two thousand men are transplanted into a desert – a thousand of them union members, and the other thousand not? Apparently, it's the "Rats" versus the "Unions," and heaven help the Rat who goes to a Union bar.

The week prior to his arrival, a Rat tried to go to a Union-controlled hotel, and they trashed him and his pick-up. Last month, there were dead (real) rats and mice hanging by their tails in the Rat ladies bathroom.

The cops, far from helping, are looking to make a buck. This Wyoming county is now the richest one in the state. If your vehicle doesn't get a work permit sticker within 24 hours of your arrival, you are an offender and can be fined \$150. Law enforcement officials coordinate their efforts to routinely sweep the parking

lots for offenders. Then, they wait for the end of the workday. The state cops catch them at the work-site exit, the county police catch them two miles out, and the city cops wait for them by their hotel. Each one will charge them.

Your vehicle can be searched on site at any time, at the whim of any cop. If even one can of beer, empty or full, is found in your vehicle, you will go to jail. Imagine the potential for getting revenge on someone who ticked you off.

When I think of the Depression, I think of the howling wind, the dryness, and the insects. Dan has to think of the rattlesnakes and the spiders. He said the black widow spiders aren't so bad – at least the anti-venom is effective. It is the brown recluse spider that worries him. It injects flesh-eating bacteria into you, and the only way to counteract them is to cut out the flesh as far as the bacteria have traveled. One man sat on the port-o-potty toilet, reached for the toilet paper, and didn't react fast enough when the spider came off the roll and onto his hand. He jumped out, into his pick-up, and went straight for help. Even so, the tip of his finger had to be removed. With these, you don't always know you've been bit until much later. Meanwhile, you have to keep an eye out in cool, dark places, for the rattlers.

I trust that all these stories were just that – stories to scare the newcomers, and to give me a taste of how much worse things could be with a husband riding out the recession in the wild, wild, west.

Sarah Brouwer
Prinsburg, Minnesota

Expressions continued from page 4

There was something in the way that he asked that made it sound like some elite club, above and beyond mere Christianity. From then on, I felt awkward at my friend's church.

If I, a thoroughly Christian kid, felt confused and frightened by that encounter in the hall, how must someone from outside of the church feel? Someone for whom "are you born again?" has as much meaning as "8, 7 Central," or indeed less?

Maybe we should all examine the language that has been furnishing our head since childhood. Do we believe the words we say and say them as if we do? Do we speak in an insider language that makes others ill-at-ease? Are we feeding the hungry a gourmet meal of "round yon virgin" when they need something more like milk?

What do you think?

We are continuing our question-of-the-month series. So far we have had good responses from our readers. This time the question is: "What kind of contact, if any, do you have with your Muslim neighbour, co-worker, or fellow student?" Write a paragraph or two in response to this question and send to bert.witvoet@sympatico.ca. We hope to publish some of your letters.

BW

The danger of majoritarianism

I read with interest the comment by Dr. Bolt about CPJ's disagreement with Prime Minister Harper's proposed legislation to eliminate the \$1.75 per vote payment to Canadian federal political parties (CC May 11).

I wonder if Dr. Bolt is aware of the entire context of the matter.

The Conservative party was given a minority mandate. It might be incumbent on a minority Prime Minister to try to build a consensus in Parliament to enable a legislative program that would be achievable. Mr. Harper did not do so. Instead, he immediately alienated the House by the introduction of a bill which would have impoverished the other parties. This was not only provocative but was also opportunistic as the Conservative Party had built up a significant bank account surplus.

The further contextual subplot was that the previous minority Harper Government was able to push through some rather controversial legislation only because the Liberal Party could not afford to trigger an election. For reasons of poverty, the Liberals could not assert an effective opposition.

A cynic might say that the Prime Minister's motivation in removing the \$1.75 per vote grant was to gut the opposition, and remove the inconvenience and burden of a voice of opposition in Parliament.

Fear of which tyranny?

However Dr. Bolt's position is that the \$1.75 "subsidy is wrong in principle and even "tyrannical." He argues the classic liberalism of the Enlightenment, and specifically the work of Alexis de Tocqueville. By Bolt's interpretation of Tocqueville, all

forms of governmental "subsidy" of political parties are wrong in that they thwart the "free" association of "free" men.

Though Tocqueville did have some admiration for the American Republican model, he did have some reservations. Tocqueville worried about majoritarianism. The tendency of ruling parties to squelch the opposition or dissenting voices in government Tocqueville called the "Tyranny of the Majority" (V.1 Pt.2 C.7). It is broadly recognized that constitutional and other restraints may be necessary to address an abuse of power of even legitimate rulers within democracies.

Dr. Bolt appears to present the present American state as a better and more representative expression of the free association of free men than other forms of democratic government.

Lack of effective opposition

I might question Dr. Bolt's wholesale endorsement of present American democratic reality. The American model has some rather undemocratic tendencies, some of which may have been predicted by Tocqueville himself.

It appears that American democracy is a two-party state which, when push comes to shove, becomes disturbingly monolithic (majoritarian?). This becomes most evident in times of big decisions. Recent events have born this out.

For instance in the Iraq debacle, it was astonishing to many of us that Americans appeared to squelch all dissent and hurl themselves as a simple mass into a foreign policy quagmire. Even the Media appeared to adopt this uncritical buy-in by their sub-

See Majoritarianism on page 6

Christian Courier

Member of Canadian Church Press and Evangelical Press Association

Canada Mail:
PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40009999
REGISTRATION NO. 9375
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO
CHRISTIAN COURIER
5 JOANNA DR
ST. CATHARINES ON L2N 1V1
email: subscriptions@christiancourier.ca

U.S. Mail:
Christian Courier
(USPS 518-090)
Second-class postage paid at
Lewiston NY
Postmaster: send address changes
to: Christian Courier, Box 110
Lewiston NY 14092

Subscriptions:	Canada (G.S.T. incl.)	USA	Overseas
one yr. (24 issues)	\$44.00	\$44.00 US	\$85.00
two yrs. (48 issues)	\$85.00	\$85.00 US	

Advertising deadlines: display and classified advertising: Wednesday, 9 a.m. (12 days before publication date) See classified pages or web site www.christiancourier.ca for more details. (ISSN 1192-3415) Published second and fourth Mondays of the month.

Address all correspondence to: 5 Joanna Dr, St. Catharines ON L2N 1V1
Tel: 905-682-8311 or 1-800-969-4838
e-mail: Advertising:ads@christiancourier.ca
Subscriptions: subscriptions@christiancourier.ca

PRINTED IN CANADA



News/Review

Pursuing economic justice and social health

Bert Witvoet

One of our writers, Bert Hielema, has translated an unusual book from the Dutch entitled *The Economics of Honor: Biblical Reflections on Money and Property*, by Roelf Haan.

This extraordinary book examines various Bible passages in 21 short chapters and comes up with surprising applications of economic principles. The author, Roelf Haan, explains that "current formulations of economic problems are placed next to biblical statements regarding security and technique, commerce and development, productivity and distribution, wealth and poverty." If this sounds too technical for those of us who are not experts in financial and economic issues, rest assured that the material is quite accessible. I, for one, found the chapters intriguing and spiritually uplifting.

Haan's main thesis is explained in the title of the book. Our economic activities should be honourable, in line with God's purpose for the human community. The book breathes concern for the poor, respect for the weak and disadvantaged. Above all, our economic transactions should reflect the foolishness of the cross.

The first chapter sets the tone. What is the true cost of the products we consume? The story of three warriors breaking through the ranks of the Philistine army (2 Samuel 23: 13-17) at the risk of losing their own lives just to bring the fugitive David a drink from the well at Bethlehem forms the orientation point for this chapter "Contemplating Cost." When these three brave men offer the drink to David, he refuses to drink it; instead, he pours it out on the ground as a sacrifice to God. Only God deserves such a costly drink.

The author makes us think about the true cost of all the things we consume. I would never have made a connection between that passage in the Old Testament and economics. David was thirsty and he attached great sentiment to the well at Bethlehem. He had an economic need. But he later realized that he had ordered something at too high a cost, much the way we consume things that, because of cheap labour or depletion of the earth's resources, come to us at too high a cost. "For a Christian, contemplating the cost must be done *coram Deo*, before the face of God, with God looking over the shoulder. Only then do we see the real components that enter into the cost calculation: the environmental costs, labor conditions, risks to fellow humans, as well as the damage done to our own religious integrity." (p.7)

This chapter by itself touched my heart and conscience at the core. But there are other chapters that achieved the same effect. Take Chapter 19 "Righteousness Exalts a Nation." The connection with economics is more obvious

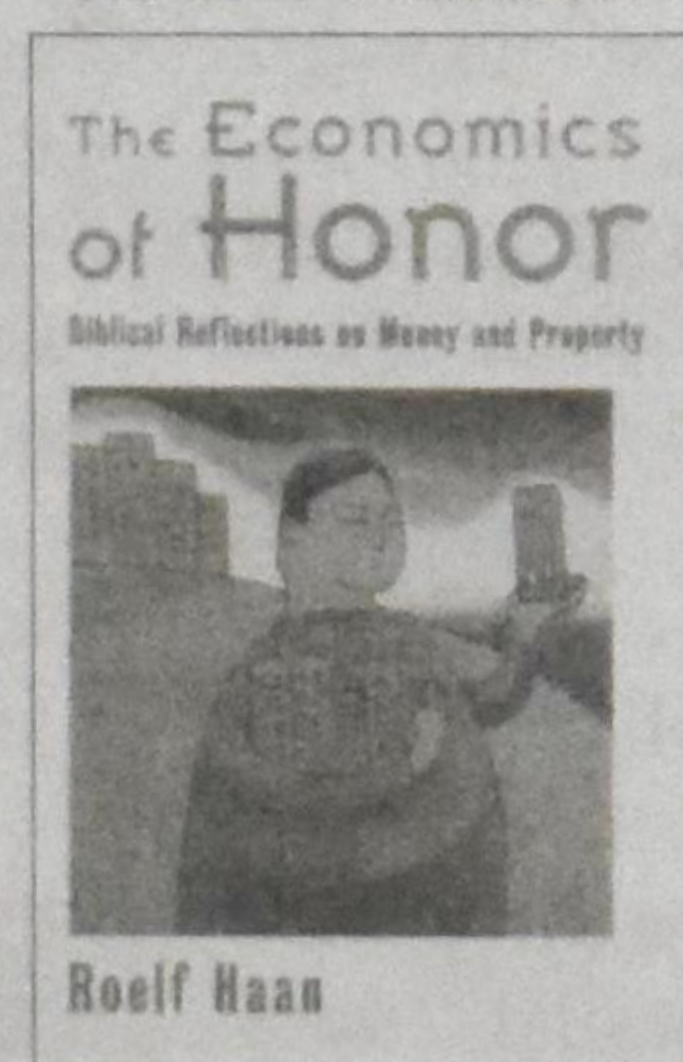
here than in other places. Haan quotes from Isaiah 58:3-12, which reads in part, "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke...? Is it not to share the bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin..."

This is a call to social justice, which goes beyond personal conduct and morals. The author warns against abstract positions and politically acceptable thinking. Obedience to God's will always means personal involvement with our neighbor – share your bread with the hungry. Don't hide from your fellow citizens.

Our economic models work a lot with the idea of scarcity. Scarcity is seen as an unavoidable part of reality, rather than as a result of our disobedience. The world is seen as a closed system, rather than as a living organism that depends on the Lord's blessing for health and growth. It matters how we relate to God, who is the Sustainer of life on earth, and the protector of our neighbor, who is always in God's sight ("Where is your brother, Abel?")

I'm not a theologian, so I won't make a pronouncement on how accurate the exegesis is of each passage. But I recognize a deeply spiritual and covenantal approach to life when I see it. This book is extremely challenging and instructive for those who want to live lives that stand out from the godless and violent ways in which our civilization wreaks havoc on the earth and its inhabitants. I heartily recommend it for group study for Christians and non-Christians alike. It's a real eye opener.

Author Marva J. Dawn calls this book "astonishing," pointing to Haan's concept of economics as "biblically radical, positively revolutionary, and hope-fully world changing." Dutch politician and author Bob Goudzwaard says the book is "a remarkable, thought-provoking book... that seeks to understand various biblical texts as a message for modern economic life." He refers to Haan's findings as "biblical treasures."



I personally thank my friend Bert Hielema for having made this valuable book available in English.

Roelf Haan, *The Economics of Honor: Biblical Reflections on Money and Property*, translated by Bert Hielema. Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.: 2009. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. \$15.00/£ 8.99.

time being heard. Democratic political discourse is limited by a disparity in resources. And large money can even privatize the public agenda. This is not just an American problem. The democratic deficit related to political financing is a question faced by all democracies.

Dr. Bolt's view that political parties are a "free association of free men" seems a little naïve about the relationship between money and politics. A system like the \$1.75 per vote plan which seeks to address the problem of disparity in political finance capital may be worth the money. An effective opposition might result, and an effective dissent might even prevent the types of global problems that we now face.

Real democracy relies on a joining of issues between all sectors of a society. The public square belongs to all of us, and the public debate must include all of us – not just those of us who are rich or powerful or in the majority.

Jim Joesse
Edmonton, Alberta

India listens after a child bride says 'I won't.'

Ben Arnoldy (CSM)

BARAROLA, INDIA – When Rekha Kalinda was nearing age 12, her parents told her they were planning to marry her off. Rekha's response would reverberate all the way up to the president of India: "No."

"I was very angry," says Rekha. "I told my father very clearly that this is my age of studying in school, and I didn't want to marry."

With the help of friends, teachers, and administrators, Rekha accomplished what the law alone has not. No child marriages have taken place in the surrounding villages where she and two other girls refused to marry last summer, and similar approaches are meeting some success in other regions.

Determined not to follow her sister's path

South Asia has the world's highest levels of child marriage, with over half of Indian women married before age 18. Child brides face greater health risks and their babies tend to be sicker, weaker, and less likely to survive childhood, according to UNICEF.

Rekha learned about the dangers of child marriage firsthand when her older sister got married at age 11. She is now illiterate, and lost all four of her children within one year of birth.



Rekha had other motivations as well. Like many children here, she had to leave school to work for her family. But she was granted a rare second chance to improve her education through a government program called the National Child Labour Project, which, in her district of Purulia, offers remedial education to 4,500 children. Rekha says she did not want to stop school again on account of marriage.

Even the president is listening

In Rekha's case, her parents initially did not listen to her. But she soon went to friends and teachers. They all came to talk with Rekha's parents, including Mr. Kundu, the government official. That collective support for her and work with her parents was crucial, says Kundu.

"Children are not taken seriously in families," he says. "A girl of 11.5 years who takes a decision for her own against the family members' will – this is an enormous, courageous act."

During a visit from two foreign journalists, the barefoot Rekha, dressed in bright purple and yellow, fielded questions confidently, despite the crowd the interview attracted. In February, she addressed a gathering of 6,000 *beedi* workers, asking them to allow their children to stay in school and delay marriage. Her best friend, Budhamani Kalindi, says she hasn't gotten any pressure to marry now that Rekha has become such a role model.

"It's terrific how you get that ripple effect of one being brave, sticking her neck out ... and then others following," says Sarah Crowe, a spokeswoman for UNICEF in Delhi.

Those ripples extend all the way to the president of India, Shrimati Pratibha Devisingh Patil, who, after reading about Rekha in the Hindustan Times newspaper, has requested to meet her. That makes her father happy, and he says he supports her staying in school.

Rekha says she wants to be a teacher when she grows up.

Is she open to marriage eventually? "Anything after 18," she says, "but not before 18 at all."

Majoritarianism *continued from page 5*

missive "embedment" into the US military machinery. How could a free press report as news an "official" military version of events? Was this majoritarianism in action? Americans seemed to be single-minded and oblivious of the ironies.

Similarly the neo-liberal economic dogma of the Reagan years ("government is the problem") resulted in the evisceration of a legitimate governmental regulation of the economy. This idea of a small and non-interventionist government became the mantra of both major parties ... with yet to be determined but already grave financial consequences.

It would be hard to believe that there were not dissenting voices in America as it confronted these major issues. Somehow these voices were not heard. Why not?

The power of money

Mass messaging is an expensive fact of life. Those with money can speak loudly. Those without money have a hard

News

12, 000 attend Canadian National March for Life – shatters previous record

Patrick Craine

OTTAWA— On May 14, 12,000 people, including 18 MPs, gathered on Parliament Hill and walked the streets of Ottawa in defense of life. In its 12-year history, the annual March for Life has become the largest yearly demonstration on the Hill. The attendance this year topped the previous record of 8,000 attendees, attained the previous two years.

The theme of this year's March was 'Exodus 2009: A Future without Abortion', which marks the fortieth anniversary of legalized abortion in Canada. On May 14, 1969, Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government allowed abortion as long as it was approved by a hospital committee of doctors and community workers. In 1988, however, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down that abortion law, asking Parliament to create a new law. Since 1988, Canada has been one of the few countries in the world with no abortion law whatsoever.

The yearly March is organized by Campaign Life Co-

alition, who describe themselves as "the political wing of the pro-life movement in Canada." According to the CLC website, in the last ten years the March attendance has quadrupled and the average age of participants has dropped from around forty to under twenty-five.

CLC President Jim Hughes is incredibly optimistic about the future of the March, reports LifeSiteNews.com. "It's a real blessing," he said, "especially the growing number of young people that are here."

Increased support

The Christian community has really begun to see the importance of the March for the cause of life in this country. For example, at their annual general meeting on the weekend of May 16-18, the Ontario State Council of the Knights of



Columbus pledged their full support, even calling its members to subsidize bus trips, reports LifeSiteNews.com. "We must spill over into the streets of Ottawa with not 8,000 but 80,000," the Knights' resolution declared.

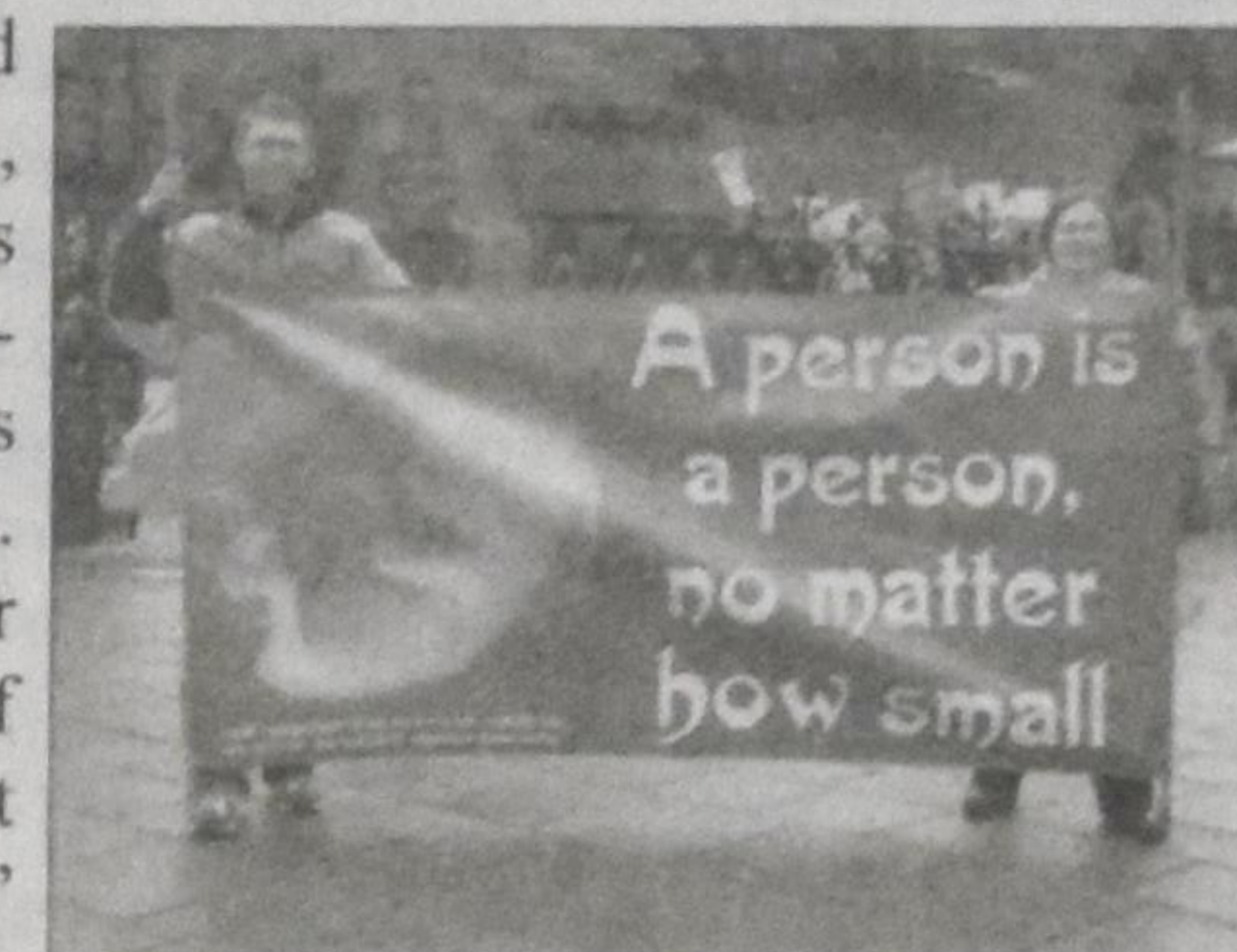
The March is attended by pro-lifers of many different faiths and of many Christian traditions. This year the events began in the morning with interdenominational prayer services at the Canadian Reformed Church and St George's Anglican Church, as well as two Catholic Masses at Notre Dame Basilica and St. Patrick's Basilica. Of particular note this year was that, for the first time, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops gave their official support, and eleven bishops are reported to have attended the Masses.

Marc Cardinal Ouellet, Archbishop of Quebec and Catholic Primate of Canada, spoke strong words to the March's attendees. "After forty years of exile from the culture of life," he said, "we come on Parliament hill to claim the return of the right to life of the human being in gestation in Canada. If our country is envied throughout the world in many respects, it is at the lowest rung of the ladder when it comes to the protection of the most fragile human beings, those who are not yet born."

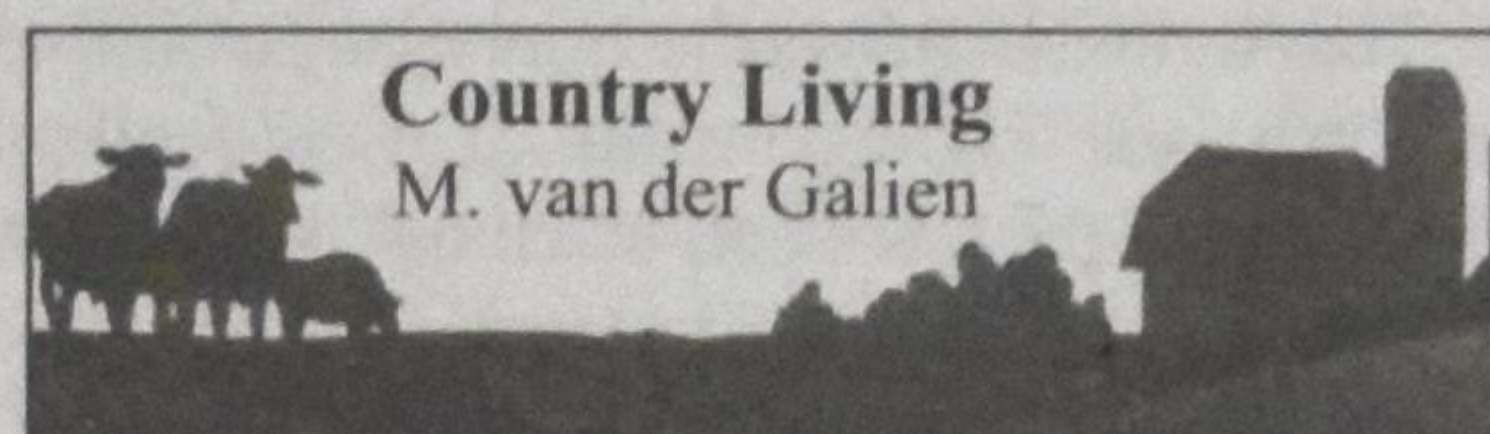
Patrick Craine resides in Halifax with his wife Jenna and newborn son Noah. He is a writer with LifeSiteNews.com and is pursuing an M.A. in Philosophy.



EXODUS 2009
A future without abortion



Farm debt in Canada is more than \$54 billion



It will be 39 years ago this August that I quit a \$1.75 an hour construction job and became a full-time farmer. I was 21 and farmed with my father while I worked in construction since the age of 16. I wanted to farm full-time on a good dairy operation. We sold our sandy-soil 100-acre bush farm, and my father and I bought a 220-acre dairy operation on clay land near Renfrew, Ontario.

I had saved up \$12,000, had my own car and a tractor. The \$12,000 bought the fluid and market share quota. Now that doesn't sound like a lot of money today for quota, but it was a lot back then. All my savings went into dairy quota. I considered it a very good investment.

My father and I had a decent down payment for the dairy farm and money to buy the good-size fluid quota. Farm Credit Corporation (FCC) and a bank lent us the money to buy the dairy farm, machinery and the extra cows we needed to fill the quota. The interest rate on the \$37,000 FCC loan was 8 3/4 per cent. It was a high interest rate compared to what FCC charges today. The basic FCC interest rate is 6.1 per cent, but some money is going out as low as 3.25 per cent. That's the lowest interest rate they have ever offered.

Our total debt was around \$60,000. That was a considerable amount of money in 1970. Father died in 1977.

In 1976 and in 1979 we bought two adjoining farms. All the fences were tore down (except for pasturing the dairy cows); we cleared the small bush, and we had most of the land tile drained. Land (all 420 acres) was in one big block.

By 1985 we were debt-free and fortunate to never having had to pay double-digit interest rates. The monthly milk cheques allowed us to expand, modernize and also to enjoy life at our cottage. We did not have to, or want to, borrow money again.

Barry Wilson, a member of the Parliamentary Press Galley specializing in agriculture, had an interesting article in a recent issue of *Better Farming*. He says Ontario farmers carried a debt load of \$5 billion in the darkest days of the early 1980s. As interest rates fell sharply, farm debt in Ontario by 1992 had fallen more than 10 per cent or \$500 million, to \$4.8 billion. Those were the golden years.

Across Canada, and especially in Ontario, 1993 became the turn-around year when borrowing inten-sified and debt levels began to grow, says Wilson.

Since then, national farm debt has been growing inexorably each year to a country-wide debt which in the past 14 years has climbed to more than \$54 billion, says Wilson.

He wrote: "Even with interest rates at 50-year lows, debt servicing charges are one of the fastest growing farm costs, taking \$4 billion last year off the bottom line of an agriculture sector which produced \$40 billion in farm gate sales and would have been \$2 billion in the red if not for \$4.1 billion in taxpayer-funded farm support programs."

He continues, "In Ontario, the growth of farmer indebtedness has been the most dramatic of any province. From \$4.95 billion in 1993, debt had soared to \$13.24 billion by the end of 2007. Almost half is owed to chartered banks, but FCC also holds \$4.3 billion of the debt."

University of Saskatchewan agricultural economist Richard Gray is quoted in the article saying the high debt load nationally is risky because debt-servicing charges are stable or rising while farm income is volatile.

Gray says that "cheap money," is one of the reasons for the debt increase, but he notes that farmers in the United States have cut or better controlled their debt load over the years.

That is where this becomes a competitiveness issue as well," he says. "Canadian farmers are hugely exposed and this is a cost that is higher here than there."

Yet, the article says, farm sector indebtedness seems to be below the radar screen for most farm and government politicians.

At a CFFO agricultural meeting I attended in Amprior recently, farmers there – the middle-aged ones, who weathered the high interest rates of the early 1980s – said it was the worst time of their life and they hope it will never happen again.

Could it?

Maynard van der Galien
(maynard@renfrew.net) keeps 80-head
of beef cattle and rents out his biggest field
– a 175-acre field.



De Nederlandse COURANT

North America's oldest and most published Dutch language paper and exclusive aftermarket distributor of the Libelle and Margriet magazines in its 55th year of publication.

SPECIAL NEW SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

De Nederlandse COURANT: ☐ 1 year \$15.00 (regular \$33.00); ☐ 2 years \$40.00 (regular \$62.50);

☐ Margriet or ☐ Libelle with De Nederlandse COURANT: ☐ 1 year \$125.00 (regular \$160.00); ☐ 2 years \$220.00 (regular \$280.00);

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Mail coupon with your cheque to:
De Nederlandse COURANT
2110 Hunt Crescent, Burlington ON L7M 2N9

Church

Christianophobia

Prejudice against Christians isn't new, nor is persecution, of course. Jesus told us to expect it if we are his faithful followers. But it now appears that an anti-Christian spirit is working insidiously to pervade every culture around the world, including our own still Christian-majority societies in Canada and the U.S. A Russian Orthodox archbishop recently referred to it as "Christianophobia": insults, violations of rights, distortions of teachings that are not lodged against believers of other religions (see item below). The news stories on this page all reflect that theme.

Russian Orthodox leader decries international 'Christianophobia'

Marian Van Til, with files from CNA

MOSCOW – During the meeting of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) in Geneva last month, a Russian Orthodox archbishop asked the conference to introduce the idea of "Christianophobia" into international laws concerning discrimination.

"It is very important to the Russian Orthodox Church to raise the issue of introducing to the list of threats the notion of Christianophobia in addition to anti-Semitism and Islamophobia," said Archbishop Georgy Ryabikh. He is the deputy head of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations.

This WCAR conference was the fourth sponsored by the U.N. However, representatives of key Western nations were not there to hear the Archbishop's call for equity for Christians. The meeting was boycotted by the U.S., Canada, Israel, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Poland and

Australia because of racist slurs by Iran and other Arab states against Israel and Zionism at the 2001 conference.

This year about 40 delegates who did attend walked out during a speech in which Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad again described Israel as a "racist government" and in which he renewed his attack on Israel's right to exist. France had warned ahead of time that Ahmadinejad would engage in "hate speech," the BBC reported.

But Archbishop Ryabikh was also concerned with how Christians are treated. He noted that at the opening ceremony U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon did talk of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia but did not "say a single word about Christianophobia."

The Archbishop says there are many examples of "violations of Christians' rights, insults of their feelings [and] public distortion of the Christian teaching" which put "the notion of 'Christianophobia'" into international circulation.

Christians 'blamed' for American Idol win

Marian Van Til

HOLLYWOOD – The hugely popular television show "American Idol" sifts through numerous wanna-be stars each season, concluding with a show-down between two finalists. A panel of judges and TV viewers then vote on who the "idol" will be.



A few weeks ago, the two finalists were Adam Lambert, a young Jewish man whose hair, eye-liner, other make-up and clothing made him look deliberately feminine, and Kris Allen, a clean-cut, newly married 23-year-old Christian and active member of New Life Church in Little Rock, Arkansas. A variety of media experts – and the American Idol Judges – assumed Lambert would win. He didn't.



Newsweek's Ramin Setoodeh complained that Allen won because of his religion, not his talent. "You could say," he wrote, "...

that religion is an irrelevant criterion for judging a singing competition. But the fact remains that Idol is one of TV's most family-friendly shows, and it draws a large number of Christian viewers. Kris Allen had the edge here."

'White-bread Christian'

That view was stated more blatantly by Kelvin Lynch, writer on gay and lesbian issues for the *Buffalo Examiner*. "Kris is practically a poster boy for heterosexual, white-bread Christianity, while Adam is an in-your-face Jewish gay man. That could very well have played a significant role in the final voting among red state voters with texting capability," wrote Lynch.

Elliot Olshansky of the *New York Daily News* offered the same explanation. "Going into the finale, there was talk of 'red state-blue state' politics at work, with Lambert's painted fingernails, 'guyliner,' and uncertain sexuality against Allen's down-home, churchgoing sensibilities. Given the current political climate, that match-up appeared to favor Lambert, but a number of blue-state types may be 'too cool' for Idol's mass appeal, and unlikely to vote."

Conservative columnist S.E. Cupp came out verbally swinging against those assumptions, however. "Liberals are once again falling back on the only explanation they can ever muster when an anointed protégé or pet cause *du jour* loses: blame the backwards, hickish, intolerant Christian masses," she wrote on May 21 in a townhall.com column. Cupp is a political

commentator who lives in New York and is co-author with Brett Joshpe of the book *Why You're Wrong About the Right*.

Cupp criticized Olshansky particularly. "Apparently for Olshansky, the Christian ear is too untrained to appreciate Lambert's nuanced vocal abilities, and thus fell for the likeable and talented Allen by default. Bizarre indeed." She wondered "what exactly" the other commentators thought the Christian voters who purportedly gave Kris Allen his win objected to about Lambert. "Nail polish? Makeup? Hair products? Have you seen Christian rock heavyweights like POD, Manafest or Decypher Down? They don't exactly look like the Vienna Boys Choir," she noted.

Cupp regrets that the assumption that conservative Christians are assumed to be homophobic was seen as the reason for Allen's win. "American Idol" has now become "politicized" when it should have remained "innocuous entertainment," she wrote. She drew a parallel to the recent Miss USA pageant which became politicized when a gay judge castigated Miss California for admitting that she does not support gay marriage.

Sarah Hepola of *Slate* also asserted that "homophobia, media overexposure, judges swooning with hyperbole, the cultural triumph of banality" all contributed to Lambert's loss. She added that that loss was fueled by "the power of 'tween girls" – most of whom are enthralled with what she called the "supremely crushable, pocket-size[d], deeply religious, utterly unthreatening Kris Allen."

'Moralistic role model'

Allen's pastor, however, was not surprised by the outcome. "He wins people over with authentic care and then he will share his faith at the right time; he tends to hold back on comments regarding himself," he told an entertainment division of Fox broadcasting.

Allen's surprise win may have also been a reflection of the growing market for Christian music. The Gospel Music Association recently reported that Christian/Gospel recorded music sales stand at almost half a billion annually and digital album sales were up 38 per cent in 2008, while digital tracks were up over 37 per cent.

"America had a grass roots campaign for a 'good ole boy!' Everyone likes a person who just does the work," said Michael Sands, a leading Hollywood Media Image Consultant. "The media picked up on Kris's Christian background so his handlers did not have to 'force feed' the worldwide audience. The Christian belief is there subliminally, no over-sell needed."

India: Anti-Christian group sets church on fire

NEW DELHI, India (Worthy News) – Evangelical Christians in India's eastern state of Andhra Pradesh face the difficult task of rebuilding their church after suspected anti-Christian militants torched the building on Sunday, May 10. The attack was the latest in a series of attacks against churches in the area, investigators said.

International Christian Concern (ICC) says an anti-Christian group set fire to the Holy Spirit Church of God Ministry Church in the state. ICC quotes witnesses as saying that the church's main door "was demolished and the interior of the church was set on fire" in the attack. "The fire destroyed wooden furniture, the pulpit and wooden bars supporting the roof. The roof currently appears to be intact despite the lack of supports holding it up," says ICC, citing sources in the region.

The church's leader, identified only as Reverend Clinton apparently for security concerns, says that several days earlier a nearby church was destroyed "in the same manner" by activists of the Hindu-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), or Indian People's Party. "While this is a copycat incident, it is not likely that the same group is responsible for both attacks," ICC believes.

The fire was set in the middle of the night but was seen by some neighbors. "Several members of the church rushed to the spot to put out the fire, but were unable to rescue anything from inside the church," ICC says. Pastor Clinton and the church elders informed police about the incident but police have so far not detained suspects, according to rights investigators. "Pastor Clinton is concerned that the fire might have been set by the neighboring land owner, who has in the past indicated his desire to build apartments on the church property," ICC adds.

The latest incident has underscored an anti-Christian climate in several parts of India, a predominantly Hindu nation of over one billion people.

U.S. public broadcasting wants to axe stations with 'Mass for Shut-ins'



ARLINGTON, Virginia (CNA) – The network board of PBS will vote this month on whether to pull affiliate status from stations that broadcast "sectarian" programming. However, almost all of what the board calls "sectarian" is Christian. The decision would affect religious programming, and particularly broadcasts of Mass for shut-ins.

Jennifer Lawson, general manager of WHUT, heads the panel that recommended a board vote on "religious programming." She told the *Washington Post* that the intent of the action is to "demonstrate editorial independence." Independence from whom or what Lawson did not explain. The move would hamper local stations' decisions to run Christian or other religious programs.

PBS bylaws call for non-commercial, non-partisan, non-sectarian programming. However, the network's editorial policy also calls for "integrity, quality, diversity and local station autonomy," the Television Broadcast Newsletter notes. "PBS believes that public broadcasting's greatest potential is realized when it serves the unique needs of the local community, and that there are wide variations in local needs and tastes. No one is better qualified to determine and respond to those local needs than the public television station

See **Broadcasting** on next page

School

The King's biology student has best paper at chemistry conference

EDMONTON (TKUC) – Jordyn Brandsma, a fourth-year biology student at The King's University College, accompanied Dr. Hank Bestman to the Western Canadian Undergraduate Chemistry Conference in Kamloops last month where Jordyn presented a paper. The conference offers undergraduate students the opportunity to share their research in poster format or in oral presentations.

Despite stiff competition from other universities, Brandsma came away with the award for the best paper in analytical chemistry. One of the judges remarked to Dr. Bestman that Brandsma demonstrated a good understanding of biochemistry, nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy and current statistical techniques for the analysis of complex datasets.

Her presentation was entitled, "Metabolic Profiles Of The Freshwater Algae *Chlamydomonas Reinhardtii* Determined By ¹H NMR And Cross Model Validation And Permutation Testing." She was given assistance by professors Kristopher Ooms and Hank Bestman, who are also her mentors. Bestman is Dean of Natural Sciences and a biology professor at The King's.

Brandsma is working this summer with Bestman as a NSERC USRA research student, as she did in 2008. She will attend and present research posters at two more conferences this summer: the 2009 annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Plant Physiologists this month at Simon Fraser University, and the 2009 Plant Biology meeting of the American Society of Plant Biology in July in Honolulu, Hawaii. Her registration for the Hawaii conference is paid for by the American Society of Plant Biology. She has also received a travel grant to attend the meeting. Co-authors on this research poster are Drs. Hank Bestman, Kris Ooms and Dr. Westerhuis from the University of Amsterdam.

The King's University College was founded by primarily Christian Reformed Church members in 1979.



Home schoolers positively affecting economy

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (PD) – "There are three key ways home schoolers are positively impacting the U.S. economy, and we should be paying close attention to this growing population," says Josephine Nicholas, chief operating officer of Published Daily, a new tech company whose aim is to help professionals better communicate and market to their networks.

Nicholas points out that, first of all, American home schoolers get higher grades than regularly schooled students, according to studies done by the National Home Education Research Institute and the Home School Legal Defense Association. Nicholas and her siblings were themselves home-schooled.

"In every other recession, it was the smart, young innovators that were the movers and shakers," continued Nicholas. "All over the country, the home-educated continue scoring at the highest levels, after which they step into being productive members of society. They are using their talents and skills in several arenas to help direct us out of the tough economy we are currently facing."

Secondly, says Nicholas, "they thrive on entrepreneurship, doing their part in this recession."

"We see time and again, that, as the home educated are becoming adults, they are positively contributing to the economy in a myriad of ways, not the least of which is by creating new companies, thereby creating new jobs," says Nicholas. "My siblings and I are a prime example of this, and there are many others."

No unemployed home schoolers

Nicholas and her siblings opened their first company in their late teens; it became successful, and they have created and expanded several companies since that time. Their latest venture, Published Daily, was recently created and is successfully keeping jobs in their home state, Michigan, which has the U.S.'s highest rate of unemployment. Published Daily is a customizable online magazine, newsletter and marketing service that helps professionals communicate information to their clients and prospects via email and social networking platforms.

Thirdly, home schoolers positively contribute to society in general, asserts Nicholas. Dr. Gary Knowles, past professor at the University of Michigan, explored adults who were home educated. None were unemployed and none were on welfare; 94 per cent said home education prepared them to be independent persons; 79 per cent said it helped them interact with individuals from different levels of society, and they strongly supported the home education method.

"When you are facing a recession like we're in now, everyone needs to do their part in their community and be a productive citizen," continues Nicholas. "The majority of home schoolers participate in an ongoing community service activity, while only 37 per cent of similarly aged U.S. adults and 39 per cent of all U.S. adults do so. Clearly, the home educated recognize that being involved in community will positive impact the country's economy in general, and they welcome the opportunity to contribute."

Faith-based students bring suit against Ontario government

TORONTO (axiomnews.ca) – Eight families who are suing the Province of Ontario for discrimination based on religion and disability appeared in court at the end of last month. The lawsuit was launched in 2007 against the provincial government for religious discrimination and violation of children's rights according to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"In faith-based schools students with special needs are forced to make a choice that is between their religion and a disability," said Ira Walfish, chair of a multi-faith coalition. "For that reason eight families have come together ... to challenge this arbitrary, and we feel discriminatory, government policy which is forcing our parent body with special

needs children to make such a heart-wrenching choice." The court action was their last resort, said Walfish.

Since 2000, through its Ministry of Health, Ontario has funded certain services for students in all schools, such as occupational therapy, speech therapy and physiotherapy. But for students who are visually impaired, hearing impaired or have learning disabilities, funding is through the Ministry of Education. Because the Ministry of Education does not fund faith-based schools, students enrolled in these schools receive no government support and therefore it is up to the school or the parents to ensure the proper resources are available.

"It is more than ironic that the government appears to fully understand the value of providing all special needs children in the public and Catholic school system with the resources they need in order to attend school," said Walfish.

For 14-year-old Dayna Blustein, the lack of government funding at United Synagogue Day School resulted in her leaving the school in Grade 6 to attend a public school. She says she noticed "a huge difference" between the resources available in the two schools.

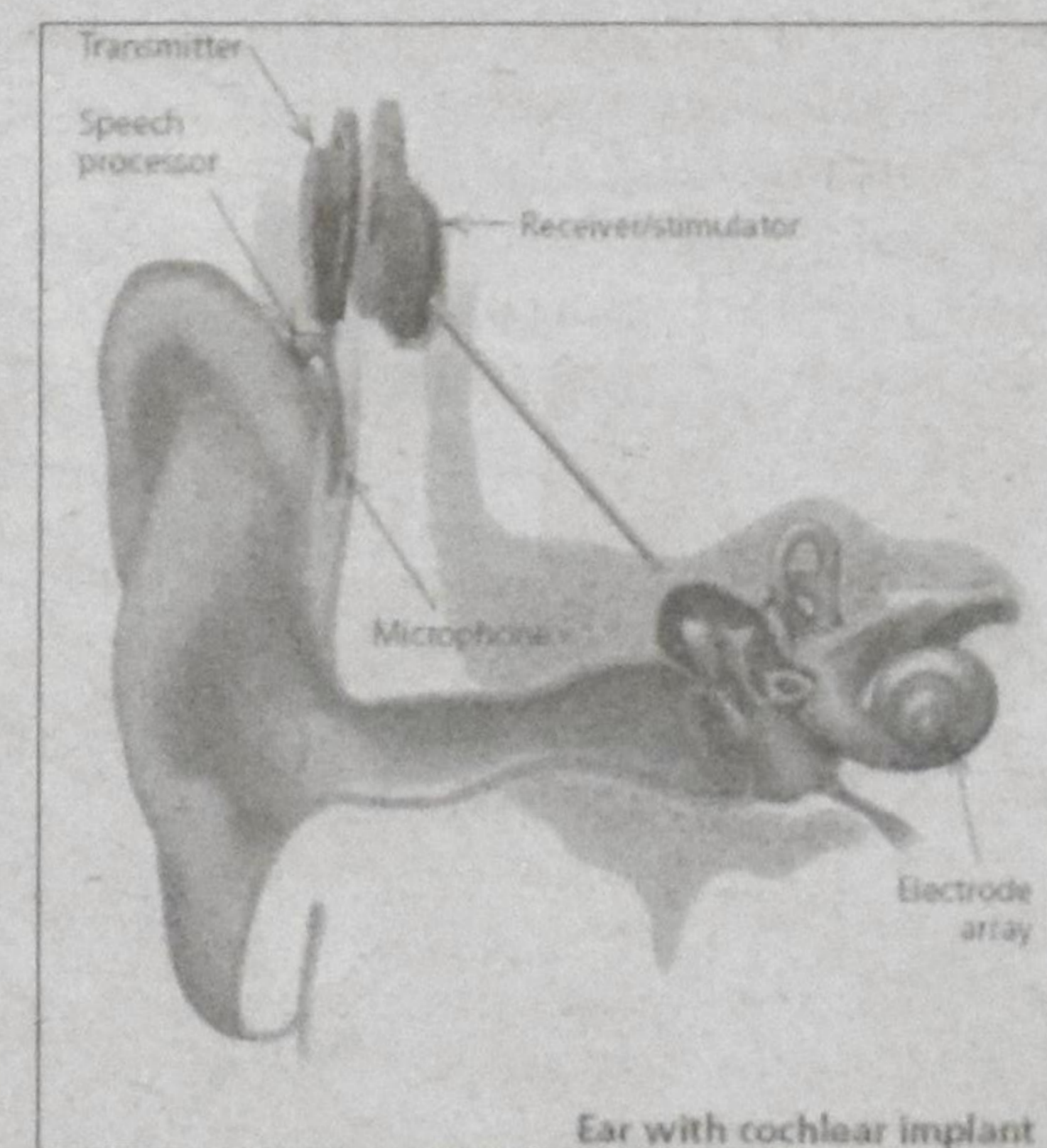
'Unfair'

Dayna wears a cochlear implant to assist with her hearing, and says while in the independent school her parents had to pay for

resources. At the public school she has an itinerant teacher for the deaf, who provides in-servicing to her regular classroom teacher, and the school funds and arranges for classroom modifications and support devices. "I really don't think it's fair that in the Province of Ontario they don't pay for my disability, and I don't get the chance to go to the school as I choose, and I think something should be done," said Dayna.

Dayna's case shows that when enrolled in the public system the resources are funded, so the government may as well pay and allow her to attend the school she chooses, notes Allan Kaufman, the families' lawyer. Kaufman says the Ministry of Health allocates \$14.4 million each year for students who have disabilities in Ontario's faith-based schools and approximately \$10 million of this money is unspent each year. That's because the government excludes these three disabilities from funding, says Kaufman.

"Our children in faith-based schools really should not have to care whether the money comes from the Ministry of Tourism as long as it flows to through the system for their special needs, but the Ontario government is clinging



Ear with cochlear implant

to this distinction of what is health and what is education," Kaufman said.

Max Greenberg, 13, attends Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto and says his learning disability takes him more time to process information. He says it is not fair that children should have to fall behind when there is government money available to help. "It's not right that school is far harder for us than it could be because the government discriminates against us," said Max.

The test case was heard in Ontario's Divisional Court in Toronto May 27 and 28 by a panel of three judges, who have not yet made their decision.

Broadcasting continued from page 8
licensed to that community."

Many PBS member stations have carried church services and Mass for shut-ins for years. Denver's KBDI-TV has broadcast Mass for Shut-ins every Sunday morning since 1966. The Archdiocese of Denver estimates 20,000 households tune in to the Mass each week.

"We've built an identity around this. People know us for this," WLAE vice president and general manager Ron Yager told the *Washington Post*. "I'm really not totally sure of their reasoning for doing this."

Art

Fledgling Christian ballet company takes flight

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Carolyn Currey, 24, and Rachel Starr Thomson, 26, are adventurous women with a vision to serve God in the area of ballet. Theirs is a story of God's providential guidance and amazing grace. Recently *Christian Courier* interviewed them by e-mail to learn more about Soli Deo Gloria Ballet, their fledgling company located in Stevensville, Ont.

Describe your educational backgrounds and backgrounds in ballet.

Currey: I was home schooled and became a certified teacher with the Royal Academy of Dance when I finished high school. I started dancing when I was ten-years-old, but never had the opportunity to take an exam until I was eighteen. When I was twenty-one, I moved with my family to the Niagara region in Ontario. I realized there was no studio there that taught my level. I visited a studio in Oakville, too far from our home to travel regularly back and forth. The artistic director asked me to join the professional division and invited me to live at her house so I wouldn't have to travel. During my stay in Oakville, I was able to take all the classes in my level as well as any other level I wanted to attend. I was given specialized classes and many private lessons to get me through the last two professional levels. God's faithfulness and provision are amazing!

Thomson: Like Carolyn, I was home schooled through my childhood and teen years. Home schooling opened up many ex-



Carolyn in *Father* and performing on 100 Huntley Street



periences and opportunities to develop my interests and passions, many of which lay in the arts. I am a writer and editor by trade, and I come from a very musical family – my dad has written more than a thousand songs, including several musical productions. Meeting Carolyn was my first real exposure to ballet, and I found that I loved it. When she had finished her professional training, we began to talk and pray about starting a Christian ballet company here in Canada.

When and how was Soli Deo Gloria Ballet established?

Currey: Soli Deo Gloria Ballet came into existence in December 2008. I was seeking God's will for my life since he had given me so much unexpected professional training. The door seemed to be closing on teaching for a while – I'm also a registered teacher with the Royal Academy of Dance and I ran my own studio in British Columbia for years. So, I looked for a Christian ballet company in Canada that I could partner with. I discovered that there was no Christian ballet company in Canada, so I decided to start one with help and support from my family and from Rachel.

Thomson: We asked ourselves what the Lord had already given us to work with, and decided that we could base a small-scale ballet on *Heart to Heart: Meeting With God in the Lord's Prayer*, a book I had written and recently published. We spent several weeks putting together music and ideas for it, and by the time we'd decided that Soli Deo Gloria Ballet would be-

come a reality, we already had a production ready to go. *Father* was our first production and our first real step toward forming a company.

What is Soli Deo Gloria Ballet's mission?

Currey: Our mission statement is "Tell the Truth, Preach the Gospel, and Glorify God." To this end, we strive for a high level of excellence in our dancers. We want to use our productions to present the old truths of God in ways that make people think about them anew.

Thomson: Our goal is not just to perform, but also to minister. We're operating on the idea that God created us, gave us our passions, and wants us to worship him with all we have. As we do that, we pray that lives will be touched and God will be glorified.

What events are you planning for in 2009 and 2010?

Thomson: In the summer of 2009 we will be touring Southern Ontario with the production *Father*. We have several ideas for other productions we'd like to put together after that tour is completed. But most of those ideas are currently on hold while we seek the Lord about what direction we should take next. We are always available to perform around holidays and for special church events, even when we're not touring a particular production. Carolyn and I also hope to start visiting churches in a wider area, sharing our vision for a Christian ballet company with others.

Do you collaborate with other Christian ballet companies?

Thomson: Because we are so new, questions like that make me chuckle. The usual answer is "We do now!" even if we haven't done so in the past. In May 2009 we teamed up with River Crossings Community Church and the South Niagara Life Centre (SNLC) to

host a performance of *Hiding Place* by Ballet Magnificat! Omega. Ballet Magnificat! is North America's premiere Christian ballet company. What they do in the States, we eventually hope to do here in Canada. *Hiding Place* is a powerful story of forgiveness, faith, and hope during the Holocaust. Bringing it to the Niagara Region was a challenge for us – and a whole lot of hard work! – but very rewarding as well. Carolyn opened the evening with a dance of her own. We were thrilled to benefit SNLC and to bring such a life changing message and beautiful artistry to our area.

How have you experienced God's faithfulness to your company as you have developed this ministry?

Thomson: The story of God's provision for Soli Deo Gloria Ballet started with the miraculous provision for Carolyn's professional training, which we already mentioned. It's continued steadily since then. The Currey family found a home with a large studio attached where Carolyn is able to train, and where rehearsals can take place. Sound equipment has been lent or donated just in the nick of time for touring. Doors have continually opened for us to come in and minister, despite the fact that both Carolyn and I have recently come back to Ontario from years out west and had very few connections here. God has also faithfully provided people, from our wonderful volunteer seamstresses, who have helped design and make various sets of costumes, to my sister Deborah Thomson, who has taken marvelous professional dance photos for us to use free of charge. We've certainly had a sense of God going before us and preparing the way.

What are the joys and challenges of your ministry?

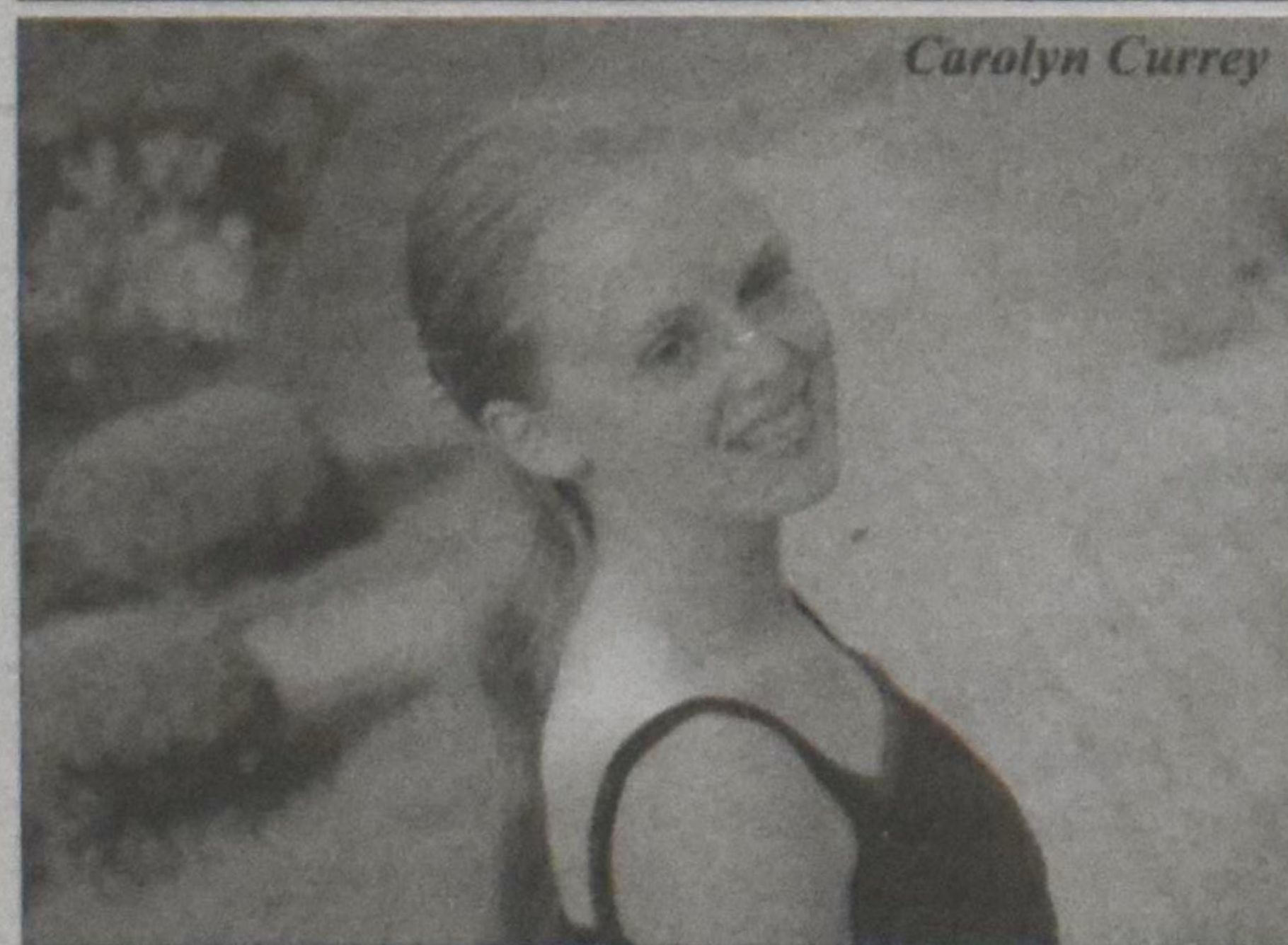
Currey: It's a challenge to be stretched in various ways, such as organizing tours, promoting ourselves, and keeping everything in order and moving forward. For me, one of the greatest joys is doing something I love so much on a professional level. It's a gift from God.

Thomson: We usually meet with our audiences after our performances. For me one of the greatest joys is hearing how our performances have impacted them. We love to hear that people were moved, ministered to, and led into worship. No matter what fields artists work in, they are always stretched when they have to put their work in front of people, but it's in connecting with the audience that the greatest blessings come.

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema is a freelance writer living in St. Catharines, ON. She recently published her first children's picture book, *Monzi and Mama's Stories*, copies of which can be ordered at sonyavf55@hotmail.com



Rachel Starr Thomson



Carolyn Currey

Reflection

Learning Dutch with laughter and tears

Lini Richarda Grol

The old ladies came to learn Dutch, for those living in this seniors' home came mostly from Holland, though some came from all over the world. But this was a Dutch-founded seniors' home, where that was what mostly was spoken.

That's why these English-speaking ladies between 65 and 95 had the courage to come to the Dutch conversation classes in order to learn to speak to the Dutchies in their own language.

They did their best and knew what they wanted to say, but certain sounds, like *deur*, *kleur* or *graag* were beyond them and caused a lot of laughter, while their teacher (also a senior) joked, "Never mind friends. You are killing my language, like I used to do yours when as a new Canadian I tried to pronounce your English. Thank heaven everyone was always patient with me, so today I am doing all right. Don't you think? So don't stop trying."

Still laughing, they mocked her. "But when you came here you were young. We are not."

Then Betty questioned half-heartedly for she really wanted to go on with the lessons and share in the fun.

"But maybe I am too old."

"No you are not too old; just keep trying. You do not need many words to show your love and sympathy for others. For that is what you really want. You all want to communicate with the other tenants and be friendly with them."

They all nodded.

Beatrix, one of the oldest, shook her head and said dejectedly,

"But I really am too old. I'll never learn to speak Dutch. At best, I can grasp what the Dutchies say to me...."

The teacher said encouragingly, "Of course you can, and they will understand you, Beatrix. Just smile at people and nod in a friendly way when our Dutchies talk to you whenever you meet them in church or other meetings, as you all already do. That will help you in any conversation and make you friends as you are here with us."

Beatrix shrugged and said hesitantly, "It's different here. We all make an effort to understand each other, and we laugh it off when we are doubtful or even downright wrong." For indeed the class had



become more of a friendly get-together while they tried to express themselves in a few short Dutch sentences.

Beatrix was rather withdrawn, but somehow she always came and participated in her way with gentle smiles or chuckles and a few words in Dutch but mostly her own language. One day she stayed after everyone had left and after an awkward silence asked the teacher, "How do the Dutch people pray?"

"Don't you go to chapel?" the teacher asked.

"I never went to church, so maybe that's why I feel I don't belong here, for this is a very conservative Christian home. But you are different," she said, then added timidly, as if feeling she was intruding when she asked, "Do you ever pray?"

When the teacher nodded, she went on eagerly. "How do you pray?"

For a moment, the teacher was at a loss for words. She was not one to talk about her religious feelings. Finally, talking in general and thinking that Beatrix was only making conversation, she said,

"Well, my favourite prayer is the Our Father, but when I am at a loss, and in need, I pray straight from the heart, 'Dear Lord help me, please, and tell about my problem.' And believe me, he helps, though not always my way. But he

makes me see that his way is the best." She chuckled a little when she added, "Though I don't always see that at that crucial moment."

Beatrix nodded and asked eagerly, "Will you type out your Our Father for me?"

Her teacher chuckled when she teased, "Do you think it will help you to speak Dutch if you learn that prayer in Dutch?"

Beatrix shrugged and said, "Who knows? But will you type it out in Dutch and English, as you do with all our lessons? It would show me how you would pray, and I would even learn the English version, for I never learned to pray."

She looked up at the teacher as if questioning and expecting a sign of disapproval for her lack of religion. But there was none, for this teacher had her own thoughts about non-religious people.

That night she typed – in extra large letters – her well-known prayer for Beatrix, side by side in English and Dutch, and shoved it under her door.

At the next lesson Beatrix looked wan and said haltingly, "Maybe I should not stay for the Dutch lesson; I don't feel all that well."

Everybody hovered in concern over her.

"Go home then, Beatrix, and take a good rest," they said, and the teacher told her, "Go home and take care, Beatrix. Come

What does it mean to be Reformed?

Brett Alan Dewing

When Angela and I were hired as editors, we both started doing research. What we looked for was not information on grammar but on what exactly it meant for us to be Reformed Christians editing a Reformed publication.

I personally felt that I had a lot of catching up to do, as I was not introduced to the Reformed denominations until I was 18, and I knew that most of the readership of the *Christian Courier* had been raised in a long tradition of Reformed life and theology. One of the books I bought in my quest to nail down and flesh out what it means to be Reformed was *Nelson's Guide to Denominations*. Here, I hoped to find a concise and scholarly take on the history and doctrine of the Reformed church. The 600-plus page tome gets around to Calvin on page 235, where the following passage begins.

"The Reformed churches trace a common history to the thought and ministry of John Calvin (1509-1564) and the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. John Calvin, a Frenchman, assumed a leadership position among French-speaking Protestants following the publication of his watershed theological text, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536), and then took control of the Protestant cause in the Canton of Geneva in Switzerland, first for two years (1536-38) and then more permanently in 1541."

Sacramental scandal

John Calvin, *Institutes*, Geneva. Check. This was all sounding familiar, but what did Calvin believe? *Nelson's* continues.

back when you feel better. Here, take your lesson with you and study it at home when you feel up to it."

However, overcome by all their concern and kindness, Beatrix changed her mind.

"Oh, I'll stay for a while. . . . We have so much fun."

"Take it easy, Beatrix, and when you feel tired, go home. We'll miss you, but we won't mind."

Beatrix smiled at them and stayed longer than the hour of the lesson, when they all lingered to chat.

She smiled or chuckled at the gentle teasing that as so often came her way, and when finally she

"The *Institutes* laid out a Reformed theology and a presbyterian ecclesial organization. Theologically, Calvin was close to Luther, the primary disagreement concerning the nature of Christ's presence in the sacrament [editor's note: notice the singular of sacrament]. In fact, Calvin's view of the sacrament can be seen as an effort to mediate the disagreement between Luther's affirmation of Christ's real presence in the sacrament and Zwingli's emphasis on getting rid of the magical elements that he felt had crept into the Catholic mass. In contrast to Zwingli's view of the Lord's supper as a memorial meal, Calvin affirmed Christ's real presence, but in keeping with Zwingli's concerns about magic, he suggested that the presence was purely spiritual (not substantial or working a change in the elements), and to be apprehended through faith."

And so that old church-splitter, the Eucharist/communion/Lord's supper rears its head again, and Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin go their slightly separate ways.

Social undercurrents

This separation was reflective of, and led to, underlying social differences. "Lutherans tended to keep as much of traditional Western Christian practice as possible – all that was determined not to be in opposition to the Bible," *Nelson's* continues. "The Reformed tended to discard anything that was not actually biblical. This more radical approach manifested itself most forcefully in the appearance of Reformed church buildings that were much more austere."

Continued on p. 15

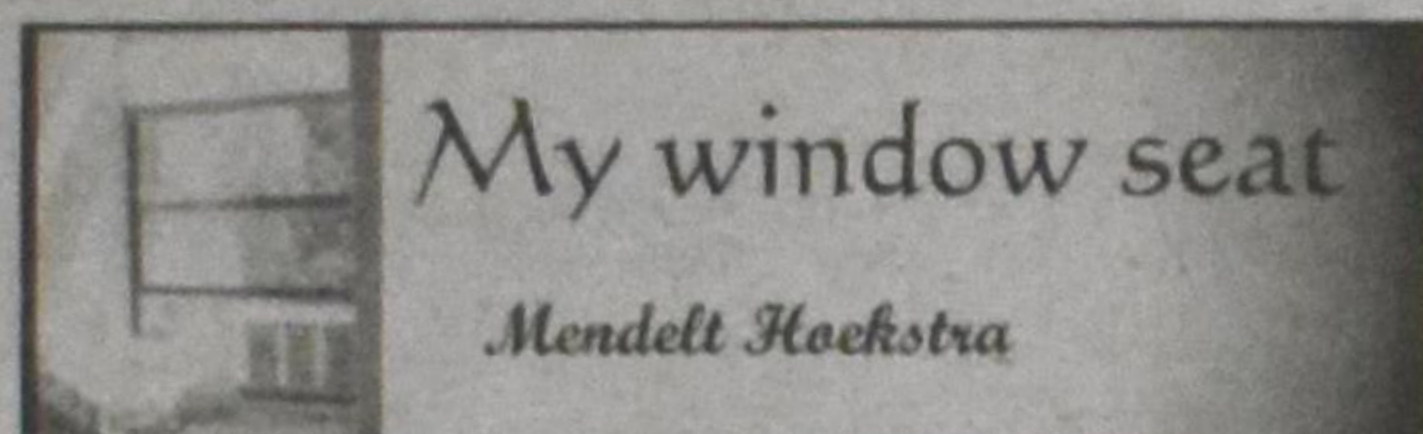
hobbled off behind her walker to her apartment, she was waved off by everybody shouting, "Take care Beatrix! See you next week!"

The next week, teacher and the class were shocked when they saw the announcement that Beatrix had died. They said a silent prayer for her. Their teacher secretly wondered if Beatrix had found peace and comfort with the prayer she had learned so late in her life.

Lini's poems, stories and scissor-cut illustrations are in books and magazines.



Columns



My window seat

Mendelt Hoekstra

The season of soccer

The summer is quickly approaching in south-western Ontario and in my house the best way to prove it is that the soccer season is upon us.

It might be surprising to know that there are more children playing soccer in Canada than there are playing hockey. According to Statistics Canada, 44 per cent of active children play soccer while only 26 per cent of active children play hockey. It may be that soccer shin pads and cleats cost a fraction of what hockey skates and equipment costs.

My five-year-old and six-year-old both play soccer in the local house league. The league is sponsored by Tim Hortons. Every four-, five-, and six-year-old in the league gets a soccer ball and a jersey with the Tim Hortons' logo written upon their chest. The company probably likes the fact that they can have such a young target audience because, in this country, who doesn't like a donut?

The division that my children play in, which is the youngest division in the league, is appropriately called *Timbits*, and each team is named after a donut. This is my third year coaching, and, in my first year, our team name was the *Dutchies*. I thought that was appropriate with four kids from Dutch descent and a coach with the last name Hoekstra. Last year we were the Maple Dips. This year we are the Honey Cruellers, which happens to be my daughter's favourite donut.

Last year, the first game was on a wet, windy, 7 degree Celsius night. It was a tough time for all involved. The first five minutes went by, and my daughter decided she had enough for the night. She then chose to practice her crying instead of soccer. I understood because as a coach I didn't want to be standing out there in the cold either. The game finally finished, we got into the van to dry off, and my daughter asked me if there was a soccer game next week. I told her yes. She thought about it and said, "It is summer next week?"



If you have ever seen a soccer game of four-, five- and six-year-olds, you know what I am talking about when I say that the game is something to behold. There is a wide range of skill and interest in each team. There are players that are so focused on winning that they aggressively pursue the ball and skilfully score with ease (my son), and there are those on the other side of the spectrum who sit on the ground during the game, pick the dandelions in the field, move away from the oncoming ball and appreciate the half-time snacks more than the game (my daughter). Last year my daughter, who was four at the time, who has long flowing blond hair and a crowd-pleasing face, was aptly described at the medal ceremony as the player with the largest contrast between amount of fans and skill.

The fan turnout for these games is high. The sidelines are littered with cheerers of all ages – including parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings. This division is a place where new referees, usually between the ages of 10 and 16, get to hone their craft. It is an athletic event that encourages participation rather than competition.

It has been called the beautiful game. When four-, five- and six-year-olds play for the love of the game and in the spirit of fitness and fun, it is beautiful indeed.

Mendelt Hoekstra (mendelt.hoekstra@gmail.com) is the founder and director of the Music Therapy program at Bethesda, an organization owned and operated by the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Ontario, that supports adults with developmental possibilities. He lives in Vineland, ON with his three children.

Intangible Things

Heidi VanderSlikke

Delighting in Daddy

I got to spend the whole day with my five month-old grandson, Daniel, when his mommy took a refresher course at the hospital. He had just awakened from his afternoon nap and we were competing to see who could make the most bizarre noises with their lips. (I was winning, having had years of experience.)

The back door slammed and Daniel's eyes widened at the sound of footsteps coming upstairs. A smile exploded across his face as his daddy's voice called out "Hello, hello!" His little arms and legs flailed in four different directions. James popped his head into the room, and Daniel's body literally vibrated while excited giggles erupted from his mouth.

Later on, as James wolfed down a sandwich, Daniel sat on my lap, content to gaze at his father. James told us all about his day. Even if Daniel couldn't understand the details, he seemed fascinated by every word Daddy said.

Memories

I drove home smiling and thinking back on the days when James and his sisters were little.

Every night after they were bathed and in their jammies, we prayed together and sang our good-night song. Then the three of them scurried to the top of the stairs and hollered in unison, "If anybody wants kisses, come and get 'em!"

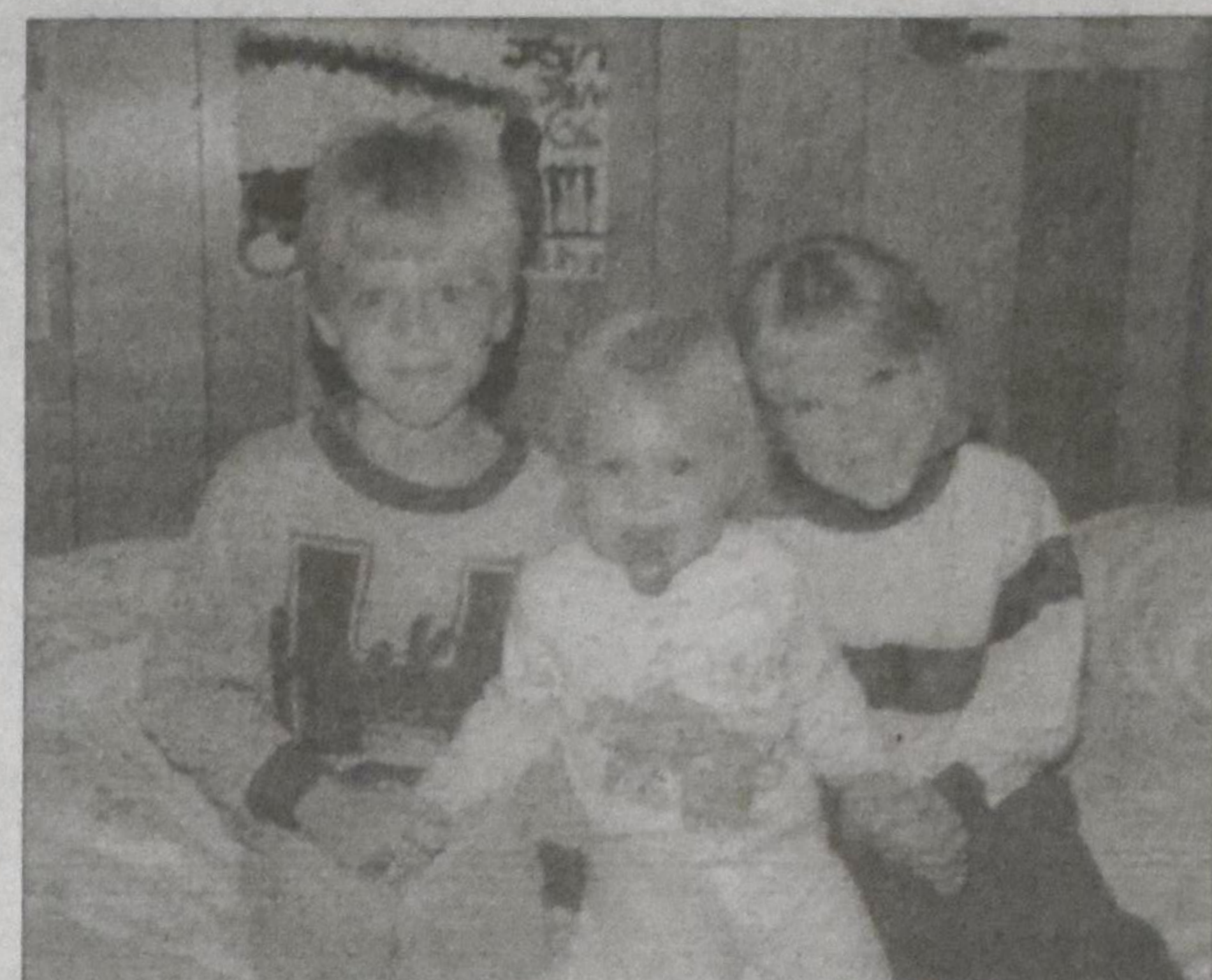
Most nights Jack bounded up the stairs, caught each child in a bear-hug and gave them one of his famous "big-fat-juicy-slobber-kisses." Then, one by one, he slung them over his shoulder, whisked them into bed, and – while tickling them mercilessly – told them to settle down and go to sleep.

But at least twice a week someone else showed up. The call for kisses was met with silence. Then strange grunting noises came from the living room. Suddenly a four-legged monster appeared at the bottom of the stairs. He looked oddly like Jack with the afghan draped over him. And he growled. He thumped noisily up the stairs, a scary voice rumbling from under the blanket, "I hate kisses. I love to eat little kids."

Without fail, James, Stephanie and Jessica screamed in reply, "Daddy! Stop it! We know it's you."

The gravelly voice continued, "It's not Daddy. I'm Mr. Boogity. And I'm hungry for belly-buttons."

The screams reached new heights. Kids scattered into the bedrooms, waiting breathlessly for the monster to arrive. When he did, they pounced on his back, tickled him and slapped his rump with all their might. But no one ever pulled the blanket off of him. Finally poor Mr. Boogity retreated and disappeared downstairs, presumably to lick his wounds.



This is the calm before the storm. James, Jessica and Stephanie, awaiting the arrival of their Daddy, or possibly his alter-ego.

Seconds later Jack would arrive and ask, "What happened? I heard screaming."

The debate as to Mr. Boogity's true identity continued while Jack tucked the children into bed. Then he would look at me, and with his most authoritative voice say, "For crying out loud, Heidi, can't you get these kids to quiet down?"

Fatherly practice

Being a good father takes more than fun and games. I look back over the years and see an unmistakable pattern of love and commitment from Jack. Through all those ordinary days, some more stressful than others, the bonds between father and children grew strong. I'm sure if given the chance, there are things Jack would do differently. He's not perfect. But he certainly is dedicated. There's no task he took more seriously than teaching his kids about their Heavenly Father, the One who is perfect, who does everything with the good of his children in mind and who invites our intimacy. We can call him Abba.

Seems to me we grown-ups could learn much from little children. Wouldn't it please God if we reveled in his daily presence, contentedly basking in his goodness and faithfully bringing all our joys and sorrows to him? He may not be here in the flesh at the moment, but his Spirit dwells in the heart of every believer, and we have the promise that he will return to take us home one day. Shouldn't we just about vibrate with anticipation when we think of it? (And shouldn't we be thinking of it every day?)

In the meantime, God sends tangible reminders of his love for us – like the laughter of children or the gift of loving parents.

Mr. Boogity hasn't visited for a long time. The afghan hangs lifelessly over the back of the sofa in the family room. But who knows? Maybe now that Daniel has arrived Mr. Boogity will return. I look forward to seeing him again.

Heidi VanderSlikke (vanderslikke@everus.ca) lives in Harriston, Ont.



Column/News

From Toddlers to Teens

by Denise Dykstra



A bonding tradition

When it comes to parenting, there are some traditions I just can't live without. Sunday afternoon naps, freeze-ahead school lunches, and gift openings in bed are high on the list, but my all-time favorite has to be the family meeting.

I love family meetings. Absolutely love them. They're a great way to promote meaningful family communication and they're a ton of fun.

Family meetings can be used to solve problems, make decisions or plan events. Ray and I have held them to discuss everything from what to do on a rainy holiday afternoon, to when the kids can get a Facebook account, to where and when they're allowed to burp. Our children have called meetings when they've wanted to switch chores, to rally for a later bed time, and when they thought they should be allowed to go to the corner store on Sundays.

Unifying events

No two family meetings are ever alike. We've laughed our way through some, fought our way through others, and cried our way through one or two. But the end result is always the same: we all feel better connected, and cooperation within our family grows.

Family meetings build unity by giving kids a say in how their family operates. The benefit of this is that everyone feels that they are important. Our 10-year-old daughter Kelly is fond of family meetings because she likes "to be able to put in (her) opinion." The middle of five children and quiet by nature, Kelly doesn't always get heard in our often chaotic home. Family meetings give her a voice, an opportunity to share her insights or thoughts, a chance to really feel that she belongs.

Family meetings also encourage cooperation. Kids are more likely to stick

to rules they've had a say in making, more apt to follow through on decisions they take ownership in. And, as family pride is built, siblings are more likely to promote the happiness and welfare of each other. This helps mold the family into something God intended it to be: a place where everyone "love(s) one another deeply, from the heart." 1 Peter 1:22

Start early

It's easiest to initiate family meetings when children are young. If your kids are mostly in their teen years when you pitch the idea, you'll probably encounter resistance. But later is better than never, so if you're determined to make this work for your family, do so now – with the help of a few tips we've learned through experience.

At your first family meeting establish some specific ground rules. A few examples: everyone must be respectful, no electronics allowed, and all family members have to be present. Make sure the consequence for not following the rules is clear, and confirm that each child knows the rules apply to them.

During family meetings it's important that every member of the family has a chance to have their say. Even the youngest kids should be given an opportunity to talk. What a three- or four-year-old shares may have nothing to do with the topic on hand, but the fact that they're participating – and being taken seriously – will make them feel that they're an integral part of the family.

Orderly process

When we have a family meeting we go around the room and ask for everyone's input. Whoever's turn it is to speak holds what we call a talking stick. We got this idea from a movie and it works like a charm. When



The Dykstra family has its family meeting.

someone is holding the talking stick (wooden spoon, stuffed animal, pen, etc.) they've got the floor. No one – including Ray and I – may interrupt. This ensures the speaker gets undivided attention and, as a bonus, it teaches the younger children to take turns.

It's a good idea to assign a chairperson for your meetings and to keep the meetings relatively short. Be flexible and follow your family's lead. Depending on the topic, attentions will start to wander at different times.

Conclude your meetings by noting some positive things about each family member – Kelly's really been practicing her violin, Tia's done a great job being cooperative in the mornings – and then pray together. As the saying goes, the family that prays together stays together.

Family meetings are an excellent way to

establish core values and teach your kids how to work with other people to make decisions. By adding meetings to your regular routine, you'll make your household run smoother and you'll help your children participate successfully in society.

Good luck with this awesome tradition. Let me know how it goes.

Meeting adjourned.

Denise Dykstra regularly holds family meetings with her husband, Ray, and kids, Sean, Jamie, Kelly, Tia and Damien. She's a freelance writer who lives in Edmonton, Alberta.



Cowboys saddle up for ... church? Amen

Evangelical Christians round up the faithful in barns and riding arenas.

LEROY, OHIO – Snow has forced Ohio's Christian cowboys inside on an early spring day. Bull riders aren't the sort of people who complain about the elements, but there are certain drawbacks to setting up a church for cowboys in northeastern Ohio.

Pastor Royce Gregory, who tackled "1,800 pounds of mean" on the rodeo circuit for 17 years before turning his life to God, isn't worried about attendance. His pulpit, an engraved tan saddle perched on spindly metal legs, stands before a wooden cross ringed with a crown of thorns. It's a symbol, he says, of the simple message of faith that is turning cowboy churches like his into a national movement.

Faith and the Western way of life have long been linked. But in recent years cow-

boy churches have adopted a distinct identity – favoring riding arenas and barns instead of church buildings, carrying out baptisms in horse troughs, welcoming wranglers whose blue jeans are ripe with the smell of a working ranch – that has allowed them to grow faster than their founders thought possible.

In Texas, the epicenter of cowboy churchdom, the Baptist General Convention established its first cowboy church in 2000. By 2004, there were 21, and now there are 145, with 20,000 attendees each week, says Charles Higgs, the Texas Baptist group's director of Western heritage ministry.



bleachers and Mr. Smith began preaching from the bed of a pickup truck. But something wasn't right. He jumped to the ground,

Gregory's church, Life Brand Cowboy Church, belongs to the Cowboy Church Network of North America, which has overseen the launch of nearly 50 churches from Colorado to North Carolina in the past five years.

Jeff Smith, the network founder, remembers the moment the concept of the cowboy church crystallized.

No cowboy himself, he had rented a dirt-floor riding arena for the service. Cowboys lined the

holding his Bible and speaking of the Lord. Just him, the people, the dirt, the horses, and the Bible. He's started two other churches since.

"We're just on the front edge of this thing," Smith says. "It certainly isn't slowing down." In addition to cowboy churches, he has advised people wanting to set up biker churches and, once, a man wanting to start a paintball church.

At Life Brand, services are held Tuesday nights, because "weekends are the only time we have to be with our horses," Gregory says.

Services are short, sermons coated in Western allegories, and no one passes a collection plate (or boot, or hat), lest the suspect materialism of megachurches and televangelists encroach on simple faith.

By Jeremy Kutner, correspondent CSM.

Columns



We are the Borg

One of the great villains in television history wasn't an individual – it was a collective.

The Borg – from Star Trek the Next Generation – were truly frightening. They were scary because – as living creatures who were half-robot, augmented by weird, glowing eyepieces and buzzing prosthetic limbs – they shared a hive mind.

No one controlled the Borg. No one directed them. They were technology addicts cruising through space looking for new ideas and species to assimilate, and make part of their collective.

I remember getting a chill first hearing a chorus of monotone voices murmuring: "We are Borg. You will be assimilated. Resistance is futile." (Since then I've realized the Borg sound exactly like a CRC congregation doing a responsive reading – but I digress).

Star Trek's writers didn't invent the notion of cyborgs. Nor were they the first to make them scary. Science fiction is filled with examples of them: Arnold Schwarzenegger's skin-covered terminator robot, Blade Runner's doomed replicants, Darth Vader's breathing apparatus and robotic limbs. What Star Trek did – which no one else has done – was make cyborgs relevant and timely.

In the early 1990s, when the Borg were introduced, cyborgs were becoming a reality. Now, they're here. All around us, people are using electronic gadgets to change their experience or perception of the world. Or, just as frequently, shut the world out.

An obvious example of such a device is the hearing aid – something many of us are reluctantly getting acquainted with as we age.

Less common is the bionic arm. In 2006, Claudia Mitchell became the first woman to receive a motorized, nervous-system controlled bionic arm.

And a company called Raytheon in Utah has gone one step further and developed a prototype robot exoskeleton for the US Army that amplifies its wearer's strength, endurance and agility.

All of these examples are pretty dramatic and easy to detect.

More subtle, though, are the gadgets many of us use every day. And those devices change not only our perception of the world, but how we interact.

Consider the GPS. A friend of mine, who is already a distracted driver, recently got one of these. Now, instead of watching the road, he's watching a satellite, which is watching his car on the road. (Incidentally, if you see a Grey Hyundai weaving across the lanes on the 401, you might want to steer clear).

Not only does the GPS change the way he drives (again, NOT for the better, trust me) it also changes the way he interacts with people when he's not driving.

It's a little thing, but a big thing at the same time: when he goes to a new place, he doesn't have to ask for directions anymore.

No one has to draw him a map on a scrap of

paper. No one is telling him which restaurants or sights to stop at along the way. He's traded opportunities for real, personal interaction for the convenience of a digital map. That's a cost he probably didn't consider when he bought the unit at the store, and probably doesn't think about when he steps into his car.

Nevertheless, the GPS unit, which tells him where to go, has also isolated him.

Then there is the iPod. Take a look around you on a bus or a train sometime. I've counted as many as half of the people on my GO train with white buds in their ears. Each of those people is obviously in a world of their own, cut off from the potential for conversation.

But the iPod has other effects as well. A recent series in the Boston Globe suggested that fewer and fewer people have the ability to whistle a tune, in part because of the use of personal MP3 players.

Add to this list of new, personal technologies the cell phone, the Blackberry, the personal computer and HDTV-on-demand and you have a long list of technologies that were less prevalent or didn't even exist a couple of decades ago that have dramatically changed the way we communicate, spend our time and see the world.

No one told us we had to adopt these technologies. We just did it, all together, and quickly. And those technologies have made us more interconnected than ever before, which means we'll probably assimilate the next wave of new technology even faster.

We can't seem to help ourselves, or take the time to slow down and ask what changes these technologies might bring, for good or for bad.

We are the Borg. We assimilate.
Resistance really does seem to be futile.
(Or is it? Next month: believers respond to the digital age.)

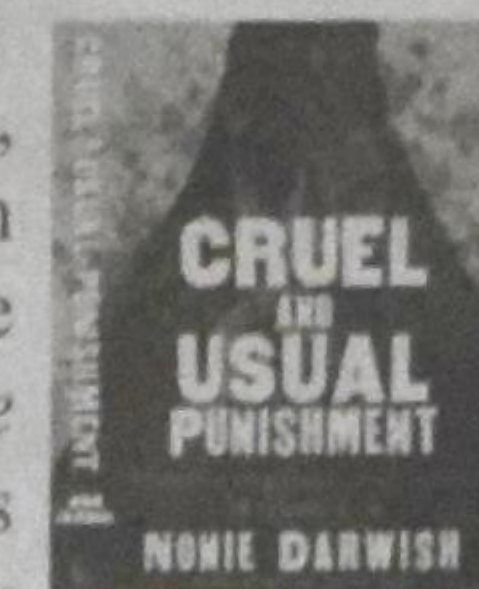


Lloyd Rang (lloyd.rang@rogers.com) is a member of Rehoboth CRC in Bowmanville Ontario. His first published piece of writing was a short story in Calvinist Contact when he was 12 years old.

From Slavery to Freedom

Harry Antonides

Nonie Darwish, born into an Egyptian Muslim family, wrote *Now They Call me Infidel* (2006), which is the story of her journey from Egyptian Muslim to American Christian. And a gripping story it is. Her new book, *Cruel and Usual Punishment: The Terrifying Global Implications of Islamic Law* is a clearly written description and evaluation of radical Islam.



Darwish explains that the roots of sharia can be traced to the harsh climate and the brutal culture in which Mohammed (570-632) thrived, and in the last ten years of his life was able to obtain a position of supremacy. It was a culture, writes Darwish, which internally was based on tribal loyalty, while externally it was warlike and cruel.

What made it possible for Mohammed to rise from obscurity to the head of a religious movement that within a very short time dominated many countries?

The answer to that question, says Darwish, is that Mohammed and his successors soon realized that the five spiritual pillars of Islam (the creed, prayer, charity, fasting, and pilgrimage) were insufficient to recruit and retain the loyalty of its followers. This, says Darwish, is what moved Islam "from the realm of religion to the realm of political totalitarian ideology."

She argues that Islam became a form of "Arab imperialism and a protectionist tool to preserve what they believe to be a supremacist Arab culture." Without violent jihad, Mohammed could not have become the ruler of Medina, Islam could not have sustained itself in Arabia, and it would not have been able to defeat the great surrounding civilizations.

A cry from the heart

Under sharia all details of male-female relations are strictly regulated and enforced, robbing women of all freedom and spontaneity. Darwish calls the sharia marriage contract "the lock on the gender cage." This document is essentially a contract that grants the male sexual intercourse rights and gives him total control over his wife or wives. (cf. Ayaan Hirsi Ali's *The Caged Virgin*.)

The chapter "Women: the Center of Oppression" describes the humiliation and abuse suffered by women under

sharia law, which reduces them to virtual house slaves, being beaten or worse, stoned to death when accused of adultery or disobeying the husband or the father ("honour killings"), subjected to genital mutilation with painful life-long consequences. The list goes on.

The result is a life of misery and deprivation described by Saudi women's rights activist Wajihah Al-Huweidar, who states that Saudi society is based on the enslavement of women to men and of society to the state. She says that Saudi women have been denied everything and that they lead the lives of slave girls. She laments that "we remain in this prison and nobody ever hears of us. When will we be freed? I don't know."

To treat women as inferior creatures, not to be trusted, and not to be shown "excess of affection" for that would empower them, is in a real sense to hurt men, too. Darwish points out that sharia "ripped apart" the core of trust of the family and replaced it with hostility and anger that poison all relationships in the family and from there into all of society.

"Free at Last"

It is impossible to do justice in a brief review to this fine and insightful book about an extremely serious threat to the "peace, order, and good government" of this and every other country on this planet. It is a most timely wake-up call. Are we listening?

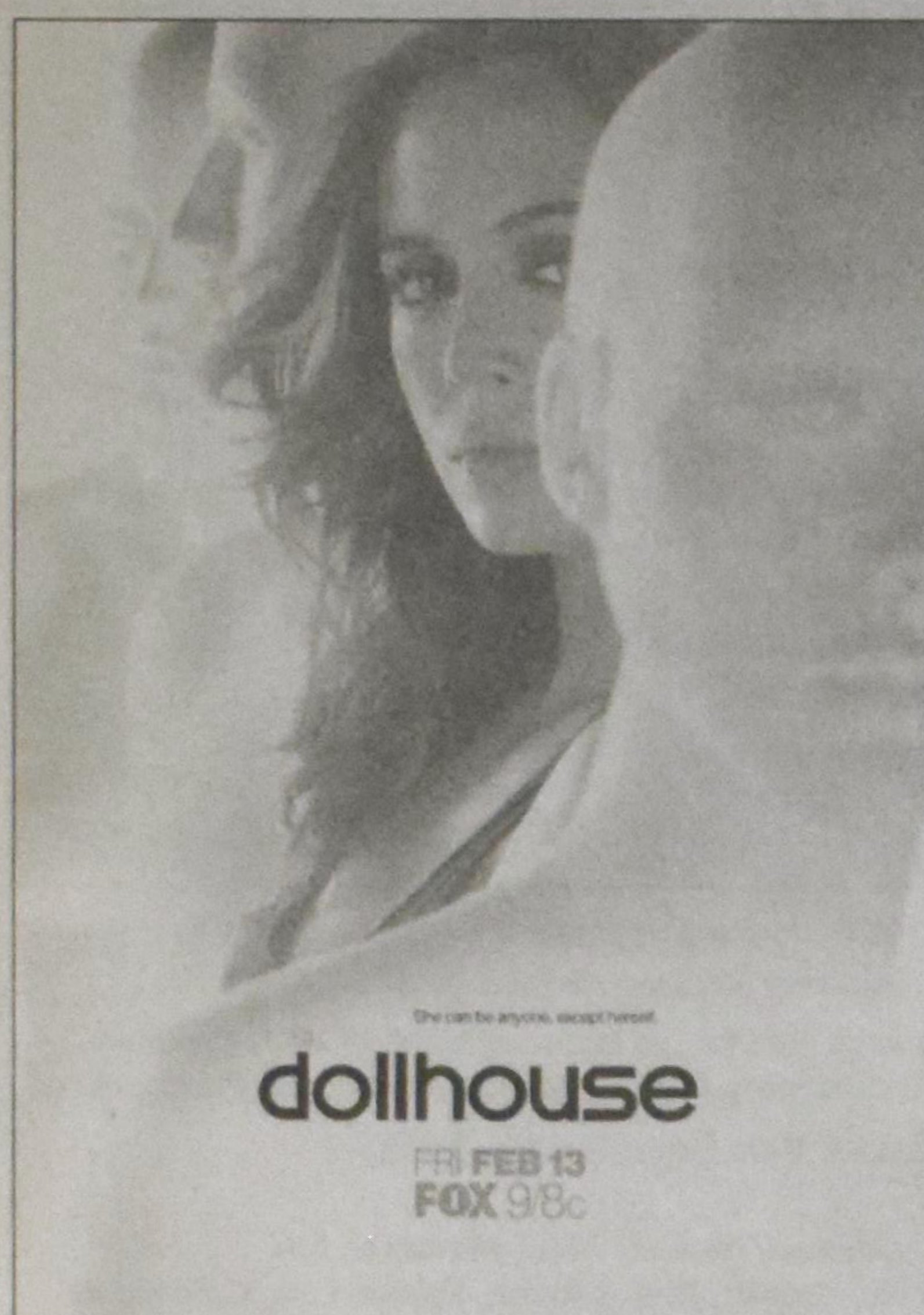
In reflecting on this question, it is prudent to remember her statement that "the problem is not so much individual Muslims as it is the Muslim scriptures commanding them to kill."

She asks what a Muslim does if he wants to rise above the hatred; "How did I do it?" She replies that she did not want to hate, lie, or consider non-Muslims her enemies. Nor did she want to befriend or defend killers. She left Islam because she felt secure enough in America to dare to leave "the culture of hate, the prison of Islam." She concludes:

Without America I could never have done it; I could not have escaped from the claws of Sharia and seen the light. I learned the other side of the story, a story untold in my Muslim society of origin, which enabled me to complete a picture, a picture of people who wanted to remain faithful to Judaism and Christianity and are suffering every day in the Muslim world. I learned truths about them from the Bible, the Old and the New Testaments. And I am grateful.

Harry Antonides (hantonides@sympatico.ca) is the author of *Stones for Bread: The Social Gospel and Its Contemporary Legacy* and *Multinationals and the peaceable Kingdom*. He and Janet live in Willowdale, Ontario.

Review



Welcome to the *Dollhouse*

important societal trends.

Dollhouse's main premise is that technology has been discovered that enables the removal of not only peoples' memories, but also their personalities. The series centers around a group of "actives" who have had their personalities erased, or wiped, so that the Dollhouse can implant them with tailor-made personalities suitable for doing the dirty work or simply to live out the fantasies of the very rich. Also of importance to the scenario are the active's "handlers" who observe them during assignments to protect them as well as the paying clients. The remaining ingredient is a rogue FBI agent who is trying to locate the Dollhouse's secret location despite the fact that no one else believes it exists.

services and the handlers are fully aware of the situation. These characters' perspectives on the extent to which the actives are actually human has a large effect on how they are treated. In these relationships much insightful social comment is made.

When the actives are imprinted with a particular personality, they are directly fulfilling a client's need and only valuable to the client to the extent that the need is fulfilled. They are not valued for simply being human but only for how useful they are. The extreme and obvious parallel here is prostitution, but the scenario also raises the question of how and for what reasons we value our fellow human beings. Is it simply because they are useful to us or is there something more (the image of God perhaps)? This issue is also addressed in instances where actives go off task or are physically injured. When an active is physically injured he or she is no longer "their best" and is limited in their usefulness.

'It's not a person – it's people.'

For all the usefulness and savvy the actives have when imprinted with a personality, they become as simple and trusting as young children between assignments, when lacking personalities in their *Tabula Rasa* state, and just as easily abused. Abuse is at its core refusal to recognize someone's humanity. This transfers quickly to how society treats those it sees as less human than others. Children, and those with physi-

cal and mental disabilities are some of the more obvious applications.

The scenarios that clients ask for are just as telling. They raise questions about what people think they need to be fully human. Some need to be excited, others need closure, one even needs the chance to live for a while after her death. Often the clients' choices lead to more danger or information than was expected.

The twelve episodes of the series that exist so far are full of the dark staging, plot twists and surprises that fans have come to expect of a Joss Whedon production, but ultimately this series is less engaging than his previous creations. This is most likely the case because while the show's central premise allows for much insight into how humanity is valued and viewed in society, it also creates a scenario where it is difficult to feel connected to the main characters, who have a new personality in every episode. Adult situations are present but are key to the social commentary in the series. Also, the twelfth episode resolves too many tensions present in the series' plot lines. The series has been renewed for a second season, and it will be interesting to find out what further revelations will occur. One thing I do know is that it is very unlikely that the process will be predictable.

Walter Miedema is a sometime seminary student on leave of absence and living in Vancouver, BC for a year where he is working as a caretaker. He writes in his spare time.

Walter Miedema

The standard television season in North America has recently aired its finales, but if you happen to be looking for a decent show to follow in reruns, might I suggest *Dollhouse*.

Dollhouse is the latest brainchild of Joss Whedon, who is best known for creating both the movie and television incarnations of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, as well as the more recent web series *Dr. Horrible's Sing-along Blog*.

As he did with the horror genre in *Buffy*, Whedon takes a seemingly far-fetched science fiction premise and uses it to explore

'Good luck with the God thing.'

The show's central premise of personality erasure goes to the core of questioning what it means to be human. It suggests clearly that humans are more than their memories, but there is also some slight suggestion that there is something beyond personality that characterizes humanity. One character dares to call it a soul. This is a something that cannot be destroyed and remains as a ghost in the system that shows up on unexpected occasions.

While the actives themselves are oblivious to the fact that they have been programmed, both the clients who pay for their

What does it mean to be Reformed? ...continued from p. 11

The Synod of Dordrecht

After Calvin's death, I read, the Reformed church was mainly active in the Netherlands, where it was closely linked to the struggle to be independent of Spain. It was here that the refining opposition of Arminius arose, but I'll go back to the book to explain exactly what that entailed.

"Whereas Calvinists had tended to affirm that God's will logically preceded his foreknowledge, Jacob Arminius suggested that God's foreknowledge came first (Romans 8:28-31). The argument affected a number of assumptions about the working of God's grace and the understanding of human nature."

Finally, in 1618-19, a decade after Arminius's death, the church held a famous synod to contest his claims:

"The council affirmed what became known as the five canons of the Synod of Dort, namely that: (1) Christ died only for those elected to salvation; (2) predestination and election to salvation constituted an act of God's sovereign will (rather than being the natural result of his foreknowledge); (3) God's grace given to an individual is irresistible; (4) humans

were so depraved that they could do nothing for their own salvation; and (5) God's elect will persevere to the end."

The book adds that "the canons of the Synod of Dort fit within a Reformed tradition of issuing statements of belief as a major act of confessing their faith" and that "the centrality of these documents reflects the importance placed upon a theologically trained leadership."

Old faith in a New World

The survey of Reformed thought concludes with a section on the church in North America.

"The several churches that bear the name Reformed...come primarily from Holland.... Though tracing their roots to a disturbance in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands, the CRC [note: that's the *Christian Reformed Church in North America*] was officially organized in the late 1850s by members of the Reformed Church in America who withdrew over what were deemed irregularities in its belief and practices."

It's a long, rich, and revered tradition, and as editors of the *Christian Courier*, we're glad to be a part of it!

What are you saying?

Did I find the insights of *Nelson's Guide to Denominations* useful? Not greatly. What I have found helpful, while carrying all of this theological history in my back pocket, has been the testimony of those I know through the *Courier*.

Columnist and Contributing Editor Peter Schuurman did a great job of summarizing a rich tradition: "I think in terms of 'touchstones' – like the sovereignty of God and our creaturely, sinful, but mandated call to unfold the creation."

On our Internet Facebook page, two readers added to the discussion.

Thomas Henry Boehm – "There was an article in the *Banner* awhile back ('Where have all the Reformers gone?'). I liked the article, and it really pointed to what I like about being Reformed. I think that maybe the past tense of Reformed may be a problem, as I think that God calls us to be re-formers of the world we live, work and play in. We are called to try and re-form our workplaces into places where fairness and equality are present; we are called to re-form our lives to reflect God's Love to those around us; we are called to continually

re-form our churches so that we don't get lost in governance and forget that the main purpose is to be Christ's light in this world; we are called to re-form creation to be what God designed his creation to be. I think that as Reformed Christians, our duty is to remember that the Reformation did not end with Calvin, but that we are continually called to re-form God's creation and reclaim it as his."

Ena De Haan – "Some of my acquaintances define Reformed as "doctrinal, dogmatic" as in the 1950s. Some of these people have joined the URC and such churches.

I/we define Reformed as "this world belongs to God" and our place is to see that it happens in all areas of life in general (not to be interpreted as "in all areas of MY life"), i.e. in work, home, school, art, entertainment, politics, in other parts of the world or at home. Wherever the poor, destitute, homeless, the environment, or those who are discriminated against are given a hand-up – that's where God is. To me that's the Reformed way, equal with the Christian way of course! Not always acted on by us but the ideal to be striven for."

Brett Alan Dewing

Classifieds

Birthday

The children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of
Hans Snoek

joyfully plan a celebration for the occasion of his
80TH BIRTHDAY.

Friends and family are invited to share in this event at an
Open House at Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church
(130 Scugog St., Bowmanville ON)
Saturday, June 27th, from 2-4 p.m.

No gifts, please, your presence is all that is desired.

Hans Snoek's mailing address:

Box 423-5647 Main St, Orono ON L0B 1M0

Anniversaries

Winnipeg, MB June 9, 1959-2009 Belleville, ON

*Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.* Psalm 84:5

Praising God for his goodness and faithfulness,

BERT AND MARGARET HOFTYZER

will be celebrating their **50th Wedding Anniversary.**
Open House to be held on Saturday, June 13th, 2009, DV
from 2-4 p.m. at Quinte Christian High School,
138 Wallbridge-Loyalist Road, Belleville, ON.
Best wishes only.

Alice & Terry Dustin, Frankford
Brittany & Jeremy Gaudaur – Corbin, Emerson, Marley
Shelby & Adam Johnson – Isaiah, Evan, Kaelynn
Shane, Hannah

Gerald & Jennifer Hoftyzer, Trenton
Ben, Alex, Natalie

Ken & Theresa Hoftyzer, Grafton
Chris, Brad, Rachel, Jeff

Address: 547 Hamilton Rd RR 5, Belleville ON K8N 4Z5

50th Wedding Anniversary

June 13, 1959 June 13, 2009

KOOP AND JANNY MULDER

Text: 1 Peter 5:7

Cast all your cares on him for he cares for you.

We give praise and thanks to God that our parents &
grandparents can celebrate **50 years together.**

Through it all, they have trusted in the Lord for
their every need and can testify to his goodness.

We love you Mom and Dad, Opa and Oma!
John (celebrating in Heaven)

Henrietta

Jeanetta & Jack van Leeuwen – Luke, Kristen, Ben
5 Keall Crescent, Bracebridge ON P1L 1Y4

JANET AND ANTHONY MOHLE

are blessed to enjoy their **50th Wedding Anniversary** this year.

In celebration of this anniversary an **Open House** will
be held 13 June 2009 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the
Christian Reformed Church in Drayton Ontario.
Thanks be to God.

Address for correspondence: Janet & Anthony Mohle
RR 3, Moorefield ON N0G 2K0

**FRISIAN PICNIC**

Wednesday

July 1, 2008 starting at 11 a.m.

at Pinehurst Lake Conservation Area,
Paris, Ontario on Highway 24A
(4 miles north of Paris)

Contact us at: fryskedei@hotmail.com

Anniversaries

June 19, 1959 - June 19, 2009

With joy and
thanksgiving to our heavenly Father

RALPH AND ELLY (nee Rhebergen) HOFTYZER

are celebrating their
50th Wedding Anniversary.

Children: Rita & Ed Koster, Linda & John Drost,
Anne & John Stevens, Gerard & Bernice Hoftyzer,
Cheryl & Tim Mulder, Yvonne & Jeff VanSoest,
28 grandchildren & 2 great-grandchildren.

We will be having an **Open House**
at the Drayton Christian Reformed Church,
June 20, 2009 from 3-5 p.m.

Home address: Box 424-10 King St
Drayton ON N0G 1P0



1954 June 3 2009

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15b

With thanksgiving to our gracious God for his enduring faithfulness, we joyfully
announce the **55th Wedding Anniversary** of our beloved parents and grandparents

ARIE AND ELLEN VAN EEK (nee Ploegstra)

Congratulations and love from:

Calvin & Gloria Van Eek – Andrew, Helena, Ellen, *Kitchener, ON*
Jane & George Nieuwenhuis – Daniel, Ruth & Aaron, Esther, Lisa, *Calgary, AB*
Esther Van Eek & Simon du Toit – Katherine, Nicholas, *Windsor, ON*
Shirlene & Michael Abma – Annalise, Aaron, Lydia, *Grand Rapids, MI*
John & Julie Van Eek – Rebecca, Hannah, Jacob, *Mount Hope, ON*

Home address: 23 Niska Drive, Waterdown ON L0R 2H3

Obituaries

On May 6, 2009 the Lord called home
his beloved child

BARBARA (Baukje) BAARDA (nee Visser)

in her 97th year.

Beloved wife of the late
George (Sjoerd) Baarda (1996).

Loving Mother of:

Chester & Agnus (Terry†), George &
Katie, the late Ann Baarda (2006†), Cor
& Ann, Eb & Dick Bokma, Frank & Nelly,
Dorothy & Ralph Janssens, Tina & Dave
Vander Wier, Gerty, Ron, Dan & Valerie,
and Dick & Sabatina.

Cherished by 42 grandchildren and 70
great-grandchildren. Also survived by her
brother-in-law Hessel Baarda and his wife
Wiep, and sister-in-law Tjitske DeJonge
of the Netherlands. Predeceased by all of
her siblings.

The Funeral service was held on Saturday
May 9 at Riverside Christian Reformed
Church, Wellandport.

1 Corinthians 15:50-57

Correspondence:

Dave & Tina Vander Wier
975 Port Davidson Rd
Wellandport ON L0R 2J0

JURRIENA HARTMAN nee Dijkhuis

"Veilig in Jesus Armen"
("Safe in the Arms of Jesus")

The Lord took unto himself, our mother,
grandmother & great-grandmother
at Shalom Manor in Grimsby
on Friday, May 8, 2009, in her 95th year.

Wife of the late Jurjen Hartman

Dear mother of:

Eilt & Hetty Hartman
Berend & Carol Hartman
Diane & Andy Regnerus
Tina & Ralph Rodermond
Ann & Joe Van Tuyl
Bert and Wilma Hartman
Blake Hartman & Deb Cameron
Grandmother of 24 grandchildren
and 57 great-grandchildren.

A Memorial Service of Mom's life was held at
CALVIN CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
420 Highway 5 West, Dundas
on Tuesday, May 12, 2009

Expressions of sympathy may be made in
the form of donations to Shalom Manor,
12 Bartlett Avenue, Grimsby ON 3LM 4N5
Romans 12:12 *"Faithful in Prayer"*

Correspondence may be sent to: Eilt Hartman
221 York Rd, Dundas ON L9H 1N1

Personal

Christian lady (widow) in her 50's seeking
friendship with a christian gentleman. My
kids are grown and on their own.

Reply to file # 2767
c/o Christian Courier
2 Aiken St
St. Catharines ON L2N 1V8



Vacation

LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

Coming to Alberta? Stay in one of our
cozy cottages.

Contact Ernst & Louise Sluijmers
403-329-8181 www.elbas.com



Vacation

Long weekends or weekly,
June, July, Aug, Sep.

Cozy 4 br. cottage in Bayswater, Nova Scotia overlooking the Atlantic Ocean on
Lighthouse Route Hwy 329, 1 km from public
beach.

Home Phone 1-902-538-8106
or 1-902-228-2615

For rent: 2 bedroom, 2 bath **guest
cottage in Tallahassee, Florida.**
\$650 per week furnished with linens,
close to state park, hiking & biking
trails, tennis. Call **850-386-6648**

**Holiday accomodation
in Holland**

with vehicle rentals and tours.
www.chestnutlane.nl

Vlaardingen, The Netherlands Cobourg, Ontario
June 23, 1954 June 23, 2009

**BERT BOLDERHEIJ AND TINA BOLDERHEIJ (nee Veerman)**

With thankfulness to God for his many blessings, the family of
Bert & Tina Bolderheij announce that they will be celebrating
their **55th Wedding Anniversary** on June 23, 2009.

They are planning to celebrate with family in Holland.
We wish them much love and many more years to come.

Josh & Jolyn – Leah and Katie, *Calgary, Alberta*
Wilma Bolderheij & Bob Kamerbeek, *Qualicum Beach, B.C.*
Bert – Martine and Arie, *Ottawa, Ontario*

Home address: 313 Parkview Hills Dr, Cobourg ON K9A 5S3

**GERALD AND JOANNE VOOGD**

1959 - 2009

The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.
Thessalonians 5:24

Our parents Gerald & Joanne (nee Biter) are celebrating
50 Years of Marriage on June 26. Happy Anniversary
mom and dad from your children and grandchildren!

Harvey & Mariah, *Edmonton, AB*
James & Maggie and Callula, *Gibsons, BC*
Bruce & Joanne, *Toronto, ON*
Helen & Mike and Sasha, *Whitehorse, YT*
Gordon & Julie and Mattias & Markus, *Ottawa, ON*

Open house on Saturday, June 27 from 2 to 4 p.m. at
New Westminster Christian Reformed Church, fellowship hall,
8255 - 13th Avenue, Burnaby, BC.

Best wishes only please to: Gerald and Joanne Voogd
8381-14th Avenue, Burnaby BC V3N 2C2
Email: gerjovoogd@shaw.ca

Travel/ForSale/Jobs



valentine
A Division of Merit Vacations

Last minute Air Transat charters to
Amsterdam from **\$99.00**
Taxes and service fees extra
Call us for **car rental** rates and **OAD tours**.
Holland America Alaska **cruise specials**
Escorted tours

Mississauga 905-890-5333 or 1-800-268-6144
London 519-472-2700 or 1-800-265-1141
TICO Registration #4499356

**LITTLE EUROPE
RESORT
AND
TRAILER PARK**



Bracebridge, Muskoka

Plan a successful vacation at our resort known for it's Dutch Hospitality. Reasonable rates for **cottage rentals**. Excellent for **camping, swimming and fishing** (ideal for group camping). Showers available. "Little Europe" is located 10 km. east of Hwy 11 on Hwy 118 East, past the Muskoka Airport.
Roel & Riet Bakema Phone: 705-645-2738
Little Europe Resort
1033 Ashley Lane RR 3, Bracebridge ON P1L 1X1
No pets please

Classifieds

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Christian Courier is published on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Copy deadline for each issue is 9 a.m. Wednesday, 12 days prior to publication date.

All personal and family announcements: rose@christiancourier.ca

Display advertising re: businesses and organizations
email: ads@christiancourier.ca

SUBMITTING YOUR AD

Mail: Christian Courier
5 Joanna Dr,
St. Catharines ON L2N 1V1
or email as above.

Career

Career Opening

Teaching Principal

Thunder Bay Christian School located in the city of Thunder Bay along the beautiful shores of Lake Superior in Northwestern Ontario is currently searching for a Teaching Principal. Thunder Bay Christian School is a CSI and OACS-member school founded on Reformed principles, where learning takes place in a Christ-centered atmosphere, preparing students for lives of kingdom service. TBCS has been serving the Christian community in Thunder Bay since 1962. Current enrolment is 140 students from JK to 10.

The ideal candidate will be an experienced administrator, with strong organizational, educational, communication and leadership gifts. This position is divided between 50% administration and 50% teaching. Interested applicants should send a letter of application, resume, statement of faith, philosophy of education and references to the following contact:

Thunder Bay Christian School
RR 2 37 Cooper Road
Thunder Bay ON P7C 4V1

Mr. Fred VanElburg, Board Chair
Email: fjelburg@hotmail.com
Ph: (807) 577-4969
Fax: (807) 939-2843 (School)

Application Deadline: July 4, 2009
Contract begins August 1, 2009

For more information on the school you may visit our website at:

www.tbaychristianschool.ca

**Unique Oak European Furniture
at the**

Imported from
Belgium & Holland

Couches, Chairs
Tables, Wall Units
Decorative Items
'Dutch Bikes'



'Old World'
Craftsmanship
& Comfort

'pop in & enjoy
a cup of coffee'

app'ts/info call: 905 563-0209 Herman & Janny Dunnink
51383 Hewitt Rd. Wainfleet hjdunnink@hotmail.com

Georgetown CRC is looking for an energetic, committed

full-time Youth Pastor

to join our ministry team.

For more information please contact us at 905-877-4322 or at gcrcrecruiter@live.ca

YOUTH DIRECTOR

CLINTON CRC seeks a dynamic and energetic leader for our youth and young adult ministries. We are praying for a person that has a love for Christ, a passion for youth, good interpersonal and leadership skills. Working with an advisory committee you will develop a relational ministry from a reformed perspective.

For a complete job description, send résumés to:

Clinton CRC

PO Box 697

Clinton ON N0M 1L0

or email to clintoncrc@tcc.on.ca and we will send the description to you.

Are you our answer to prayer?

Duncan CRC on Vancouver Island, British Columbia is seeking an

Associate Pastor of Congregational Life

passionate about youth and young families. If you are enthusiastic about helping others discover their gifts, facilitating church programs, building relationships and preaching occasionally.....the Spirit may be calling you to work alongside our senior pastor.

Innovative and energetic persons to apply to:

Duncan CRC Attn: Bill Wikkerink

930 Trunk Rd, Duncan BC V9L 2S1

or call 250-748-2122

or email: crc.duncan@shawcable.com

Parent Professionals

Mutual Support Systems of the Niagara region, a private, non-profit agency providing residential care and treatment for children invites applications for the position of **House Parents**.

An ideal career choice for a married couple to work together in meaningful ministry. These are full-time, salaried, live-in positions for both partners.

Visit www.mutualsupport.net for more information.

Position commences September 1, 2009.

Please contact:

Randy Klassen

CHRP Associate Director-Human Resources

905-892-4332

rklassen@mutualsupport.net

Mutual Support is a member of the Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth.

Job opportunities run in recent issues can also be found on our website:
www.christiancourier.ca

**Call our EXPERIENCED TEAM of
PROFESSIONALS for a quote Today!**



Andy Vanderhout
R.I.B. (ON)



Brian Vanderhout
F.I.I.C., C.A.I.B



Peter John Van Dyk
C.A.I.B



Paul Vanderveen
C.A.I.B



Charles Stam
B COMM. R.I.B



Lee Dam
R.I.B. (ON)



Matt Poort
C.A.I.B

Toll-free: 1 866-694-7276
Tel: 905-632-6192
www.pvv-insurance.com



P.V.&V. Insurance Centre Ltd.
Trust our EXPERIENCE

Classifieds

Planning a Gift to Charity?

Call CSS for impartial, confidential,
and **free** professional advice
across Canada.

Connecting Donors, Charities & Ministries



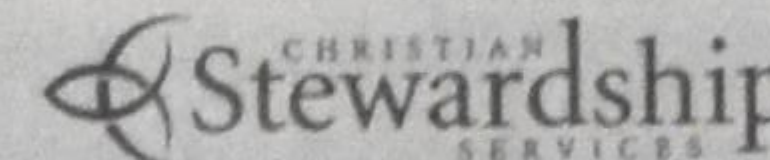
1-800-267-8890 | admin@csservices.ca
www.csservices.ca

A charitable gift annuity offers:



- the peace of mind of a guaranteed lifetime income, largely tax free
- the satisfaction of knowing that you will be providing a future gift for Redeemer University College

Blended rate of 6 - 10% (capital returned & interest) for those over 65.
Please contact us for your own confidential, no-obligation quote.
Information available on other gift-planning options as well.



Redeemer University College 777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, Ontario L9K 1J4
905-648-2139 ext. 4205 (Ben) stewardship@redeemer.on.ca

ADA REALTY LTD

2011-137 Ave. Suite 404
Edmonton AB T5A 4W2

780-473-8149

Sid Vandermeulen

Contact us first
when you think of moving
to Edmonton & district.
Home of confidence

Elim Investment Opportunities

Bonds

Available @ Prime

Promissory Notes

Available @ Prime plus 1%

This is not to be construed as an offer to solicit investments and no investment can be made until the Investor has received an Information Statement issued by Elim Housing Society.

Established by the Elim Housing Society in 1995, Elim Village is located on 20 acres in the heart of Surrey's Fleetwood area. Based and operated on Christian principles, Elim's vision is to provide various levels of quality care for seniors.

Today, over 400 people call Elim home and are able to enjoy the benefits of living within a caring Christian retirement community. As part of Elim's ongoing successful financial strategy, we offer a variety of investment opportunities. Our rates are determined by the Royal Bank of Canada's prime rate.

We currently offer
Royal Bank of Canada's
prime plus 1%
(not to exceed 7%)

On May 26, 2009
Elim Investments
were accruing
interest at

3.25%

For more information regarding investment with Elim Village, contact Terry-Lynn Dryfhout at tld@elimvillage.com or call 604.583.3546 Ext 4031
Visit our website at www.ElimVillage.com



A Christian Retirement Community



The sign of quality!

SCHRÖDER
FURNITURE

Canada Ltd.



Come and visit us at
2140 Dunwin Dr.
Mississauga, Ontario
905-828-9511

www.schroderfurniture.com

Do you have problems
getting out of your existing
furniture?

Is your sofa wearing soft?

Our Coil Spring
Construction gives you a
lifetime of
pain free comfort

At Schroder furniture you can find
exceptional **Quality** and **long**
lasting Seating Comfort.

BUSINESS AND SERVICE
DIRECTORY**MERRITT
FUNERAL HOME**

287 Station St.
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Serving Families for 4 Generations

Director: **Thomas C Merritt**

Fax 905-957-1371 Ph: **905-957-7031**

Website: www.merritt-fh.com FSAC

**Winter Bookkeeping
& Tax Service**

4184 Mountain St.
PO Box 844
Beamsville ON L0R 1B0

Ph: **905-563-4471**

Fax: **905-563-4696**

Email: wbts@bellnet.ca

MEESTER INSURANCE
Smithville, Ont.

Phone:

905-957-2333

OR

1-800-465-8256

www.meesterinsurance.com



Free Estimates



St. Catharines: (905) 646-0199

Beamsville: (905) 563-7374

Burlington: (905) 634-6978

Email: info@dykstrabros.com

Website: dykstrabros.com

**Re/Max Escarpment
Realty Inc.**

Mark Nyman
370 Wilson St. E, Unit 11
Ancaster ON L9G 4S4

905-304-3303

Email: marknyman@remaxescarpment.com

Website: www.marknyman.com

**JERRY'S AUTO BODY**
(Beamsville) Inc.

Serving Beamsville and area since 1969

• Complete Collision Repairs

• Quality Refinishing

Jerry Gerritsen 5529 Regional Rd. 81

Alan Gerritsen Beamsville ON L0R 1B3

Phone/Fax: **905-563-7702**



578 Upper James St.
Hamilton, ON L9C 2Y6

For all your printing needs

Call Brian or Kathie Bezemer at:

1-800-247-0155 or 905-574-0822

Email: bezemer@digitalartandgraphics.com

BAKKER

BARRISTER & SOLICITOR
1 Keefer Road

St. Catharines, Ontario L2M 6K4

Email: bert@bakkerlaw.ca

East of Lock 1 - on site parking

905-688-9352

Albert J Bakker

R. HAALBOOM, Q.C.

Barrister Solicitor Notary

Richard Rijk Haalboom, Q.C., B.A., J.D.

7 Duke St. West Ph: **519-579-2920**

Suite 304 Fax: **519-576-0471**

Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6N7

E-mail: richard@haalboom.ca

**Tax Free Savings Account
(TFSA)**

Now available.

Call for an application.

CRC Extension Fund

416-461-1207

Events/Advertising

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 3 Hollandse Dag 10:00 am at First Christian Reformed Church, 310 Kingscourt Avenue, Kingston. Spreker: Rev. Hans Uittenbosch. For info call (613) 546-5615

June 3-5 ACROSS BORDERS an international conference featuring Dutch-Canadian and Dutch-American history and culture, to be held at Redeemer University College, Ancaster. For more details please contact Petra Zantingh pzantingh@redeemer.ca 905.648.2131

June 6 Outdoor Pizza Evening, a RE-create fundraising event filled with fun, food, art and stories.) For tickets or more information contact 905-528-0353 or visit www.re-create.ca.

June 10 Hollandse Dag in the Moorefield Community Centre. See ad below.

June 13, 14 Faith Christian Reformed Church of Burlington, Ontario invites friends and past members to celebrate with them **25 years** of God's faithfulness. On Saturday, June 13, we are planning a BBQ beginning at 5:00 p.m. with an evening of fellowship at Faith CRC, 2265 Mountside Drive, Burlington. On Sunday, June 14, a service of celebration will be held at Compass Point Church at 2501 Eaglesfield Drive in Burlington at 2:30 p.m. *All are welcome.* For complete details please access our website at www.faithcrc.ca or contact the church office at 905-336-5353 We also welcome your stories, memories and pictures at 25years@faithcrc.ca

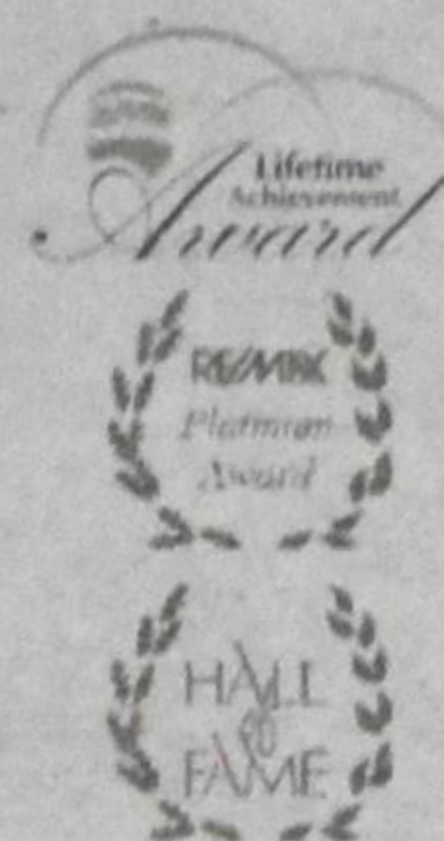
July 1 Frisian Picnic starting at 11 am at Pinehurst Lake Conservation Area, Paris, Ontario. Contact fykedei@hotmail.com

Oct 3 The next Netherlands Bazaar will be held in the Thornhill Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Ave. in Thornhill, Ontario

Put our experience
to work for you.

**THE KLOET RE/MAX
SCHURINGA
TEAM**

Outstanding agents.
Outstanding results.

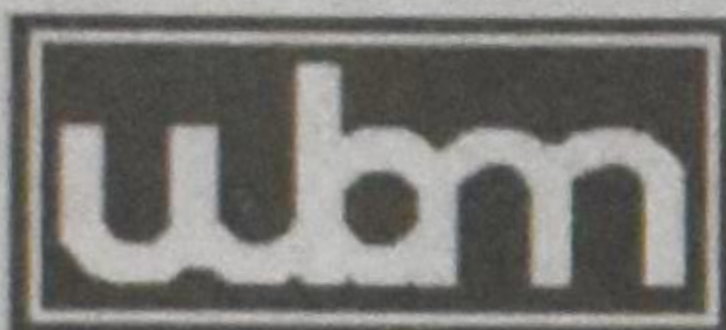


George Kloet
Sales Representative
gkloet@trebnet.com
www.georgekloet.com

Pauline Schuringa
Sales Representative
pschuringa@trebnet.com
www.paulineschuringa.com

RE/MAX Realty Enterprises Inc., Brokerage
1697 Lakeshore Road West
Mississauga, ON L5J 1J4

Tel. 905.855.2200



Wallaceburg Bookbinding

& MFG. CO. LTD.

We Bind, Rebind and Restore

Save money— Don't buy replacements!

Churches: Send us one of your hymnals as a sample and we will rebind it at no cost. Normal price for quantities of five or more—\$8.75

Personal Orders: We will bind short run editions e.g. family histories as well as rebinding and restoring personal books.

1-800-214-2463

FAX (519)627-6922

95 Arnold St. Wallaceburg ON N8A 3P3

http://wbmbindery.com



★ 39 YEARS OF SERVICE ★

Your funds will be invested in Christian Reformed Church and Christian school building projects in Canada.

New rates to June 30, 2009

We pay **3.25%** on CRC deposits.

Earn approx. **3.5%** on RRP/RRIF/TFSA



Write:

CRC Extension Fund
45 Harriet St,
Toronto ON M4L 2G1

Fax: 416-465-636

Call: 416-461-1207

...serving Christian Reformed churches and Christian schools since 1970

NEW! Christian Courier has a group on

facebook

http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=50535489152

or search groups, keywords
Christian Courier.

We would like to know your ideas!



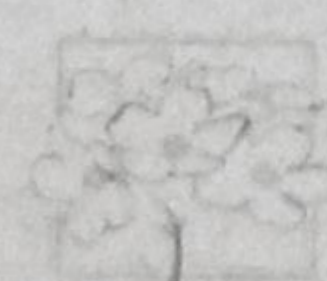
Tyler van Middelkoop
CFP, CLU

Beat the Bank.

Call me today for a no obligation
assessment on your Mortgage
Insurance.



P.V.&V. Financial Centre
905 632 0240
1 866 694 7272
www.pvv-insurance.com



**KITCHING,
STEEPE & LUDWIG**
FUNERAL HOME LIMITED

PO Box 184 146 Mill Street North
Waterdown, Ontario LOR 2H0
T: 905.689.4852 F: 905.689.6810
www.kitchingsteepeandludwig.com

Ron Steepe, Keith Waller, Rick Ludwig,
Greg Luxon, Henry Sieders Funeral Directors

Low Interest Rates?

Ever considered a charitable GIFT ANNUITY?

Sex and Age	Rate /amount	Charitable receipt	Tax Free	Taxable
Male 70	5.97% \$1,194	\$5,791	\$1,084	\$110
Female 75	6.20% \$1240	\$6,010	\$1,202	\$38

Amount based on sample of \$20,000

Sample for joint life annuity (payable as long as either person is alive)

Male 75 &				
Female 75	5.59% \$1,118	\$4,889	\$1,045	\$73

Call or fax for an explanatory brochure and/or confidential no-obligation quotation.
Phone: 416-410-4244 | Fax: 416-465-6367 | www.linkcharity.ca

Link Charity
Canada Inc.

1-800-387-8146 | 45 Harriet St, TORONTO, ON M4L 2G1

MARANATHA HOMES

Living independently in Christian community



MARANATHA HOMES, located in south Burlington near many amenities, is a place where Christian seniors can enjoy independent living in community with others.

- Reasonable rent rates at \$740 per month
- Newly renovated units
- Award winning architectural design
- Well maintained building and grounds
- No condo fees or utility bills

All this and more make Maranatha Homes an attractive and affordable accommodation for seniors.

For further information contact:

Rosanne van der Woerd
109-3260 New St. Burlington ON L7N 3L4
905-681-0311

Email:

rvanderwoerd@sympatico.ca

UNIGLOBE
DCA Travel & Cruise

Visit us at:
www.uniglobedcatravel.com
info@uniglobedcatravel.com
TORONTO: 416-224-5211
1-800-667-2525
Canada wide - ticket home delivery

DENURE TOURS
Motorcoach Transportation
& Oceanside Living



DAYTONA year round departures 10 Days from CA\$679 per person
PANAMA CITY BEACH fall/winter departures 10 Days from CA\$799 per person
MYRTLE BEACH fall/winter departures 10 Days from CA\$799 per person

LONG STAYS 17 / 24 / 31 DAYS
Also Available - call for details.

This is your Travel Centre for all your Travel Needs!!!

On. Reg. 01495998

AMSTERDAM
KLM/AIR TRANSAT **\$199**
From CA\$383 plus service fees
- select June departures

ALASKA CRUISE
- 7 Day Inside Passage -
Round Trip Vancouver
NORWEGIAN SUN

7th June from CA\$234.08 + taxes CA\$375.76 per person
14th June from CA\$346.08 + taxes CA\$375.76 per person

News

Religion, politics and pork

Christian pig farmers in Egypt devastated by swine flu

Dena Nicolai

CAIRO, Egypt – At the end of April, with fears of swine flu spreading across the Atlantic from Mexico, the Egyptian government announced its plan to cull the country’s estimated 300,000 pigs. Both the World Health Organization and the UN criticized the move, saying there is no evidence to support the idea that the current H1N1 virus strain can be passed on to people by pigs. But the government has slaughtered tens of thousands of the animals and continues to round up more, threatening the livelihoods of some of Egypt’s poorest citizens, like 18-year old Keroulos Badri.

Badri, 18, became the sole provider for his eight sisters after his parents passed away last year. Part of the *zabaleen* (garbage collector) community in Cairo, Badri, a Coptic Orthodox Christian, also raises pigs. He and his sisters feed their herd of 38 the organic waste they sort from the garbage he collects from homes in Cairo. Now his herd faces extinction, with little hope of real compensation from the government.

At first there was strong anger from the pig farming community, and many of them rioted when security forces were sent to begin the animal round-up. When a woman from a charity showed up at Badri’s door and offered to pay him for the meat, he told her over “over my dead body,” hoping he could keep his pigs alive and breeding. But after seeing his friends’ herds slaughtered despite their protests, he called her back the next day and accepted the offer.

Pigs have become political

Behind the government rhetoric about disease-prevention are many voices discussing what one ex-pat in Egypt called,



Many of Egypt’s pig farmers are poor and live in slum areas like this one, amidst the garbage they collect to feed their pigs.



Egyptian farmers block the streets to prevent health ministry vehicles getting past to carry out the mass-slaughter of swine. (NASSER NOURI/AP)



When the young men tried to protest, they were beaten and their pigs were taken anyway.

“ill-informed prejudice at best or opportunistic persecution at worst.” Pigs, considered unclean in Islam, have become political in a country whose government is continually trying to balance religion and politics.

Though some Christians have called the cull a direct attack on the Christian population, others agree that it is an ignorant opportunity to redeem Egypt in the eyes of the rest of the Muslim world. The cull has not only revealed pigs being raised in the slums, but also on organized farms, with some Muslim employees. All of this has been an embarrassment to the government. “[The authorities]

have been trying to cover up how many pigs are in Egypt but with the swine flu panic it came out, so now the government has to deal with people’s perceptions, and they don’t want to be seen as a Muslim country that raises pigs,” says Diaa, an evangelical Christian. “I don’t believe they are killing them because of the faith of their owners, but I do think that the government knows that the pig farmers have no power because they are Christian and poor, so they will not be able to pressure the government to stop,” he adds.

The eyes of the majority

Opinions among Muslims are mixed. “I am a Muslim and I still think it’s horrible! I think it is discrimination and I

can’t stand for discrimination of any kind,” says Dalya, a 28 year old Egyptian public health worker. “There is no connection at all between pigs and the flu, but of course our government won’t listen.”

Others compare it to the bird flu, which hit Egypt hard in 2006, resulting in the slaughter of an estimated 25 million chickens and destroying the livelihood of both Muslim and Christian poultry farmers. The fact that the bird flu was directly linked to the poultry themselves is brushed off.

Still others, such as Muslim blogger Zeinobia, agree with the cull but blame the government for the extent of the situation. She believes that allowing pig farms to expand in the first place brought Egypt to this situation. “Slaughtering the pigs for sure is not the end of the garbage collectors’ agony in Egypt, it is just part of the problem. Solving [the problem of the poverty of the *zabaleen*] needs a better democratic government,” she writes.

Lives affected

In the Thursday night service of the monastery of St. Simaan, a magnificent Coptic cave church in the middle of one of the largest *zabaleen* communities in Cairo, the loud weeping of the women is a testament to the hurt the political manoeuvring is bringing. With up to 40,000 people affected, the community is trying to rally together but there seems to be little they can do.

Om Kamel, 60, lives next to many of the pig farmers. She spits to show me what she thinks about pork when I ask if she eats it, and she dislikes living near their smell and noise, but her sympathies still lie with the farmers. “But we can’t do anything,” adds her daughter Seham. “When the young men tried to protest, they were beaten and their pigs were taken anyway.”

Many of the *zabaleen* say if their pigs are gone, they will strike and stop the garbage collecting. Without pigs to feed, they say there is no incentive to continue to collect the trash. What consequences this will have on greater Cairo remains to be seen, as the foreign waste-management companies hired by the government several years ago cannot compare with the traditional *zabaleen* methods of door-to-door collection and manual recycling.

But even strike threats don’t seem to be changing the government’s minds. “This is a pig genocide,” says Hoda, a volunteer with a local NGO that works with the *zabaleen* community. “What are these families supposed to do?”

Dena Nicolai, originally from Edmonton, is currently working and volunteering in Cairo, Egypt.



www.sudoku-puzzles.net

Sudoku 9x9 - Medium (135380249)

5	8		3					
		9		5		2		
			4					7
	7				3		1	
8			5		6			9
	3		9				8	
1					8			
		2		4		6		
					9		4	2